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HISTORY  
OF THE  
IRISH REBELLION  
OF 1798:

*A PERSONAL NARRATIVE.*

BY  
CHARLES HAMILTON TEELING.

"REBELLION! foul dishonouring word,  
Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained  
The holiest cause that tongue or sword  
Of mortal ever lost or gained—  
How many a spirit born to bless,  
Has sunk beneath that withering name,  
Whom but a day's—an hour's success,  
Had wasted to eternal fame."

**Moore.**

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TO MY WIFE AND MY CHILDREN,

AT WHOSE REQUEST SOLELY IT HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN,

I DEDICATE THIS NARRATIVE,

RESPECTED AND BELOVED, THEY ARE ENTITLED TO

THIS MARK OF MY REMEMBRANCE,

THE ONLY INHERITANCE

WHICH THE ENEMIES OF MY COUNTRY HAVE LEFT

ME TO BEQUEATH.

CHARLES H. TEELING.

DONOGUE COTTAGE,  
1828.



# CONTENTS.

---

Page

INTRODUCTION.....	1
-------------------	---

## CHAPTER I.

National Indignation on the Removal of Lord Fitzwilliam from the Administration of Ireland—Opinions of Mr. Grattan—Persecutions in Armagh—Lord Gosford—Rapid Progress of the United Irish Societies .....	5
---	---

## CHAPTER II.

Arrests in Ulster—Lord Castlereagh .....	12
--	----

## CHAPTER III.

Popular excitement—Hostile intentions towards Lord Castlereagh—Suppressed—State Prisoners conducted to the Capital—Lodged in Prison .....	16
---	----

## CHAPTER IV.

Committal of State Prisoners by Judge Boyd—Prison Scenes—Magisterial Atrocity—Severe restrictions imposed on the Prisoners—Ingenious contrivance to transmit communications from without—Partial relaxation of severities—Lord O'Neill..	21
--	----

## CHAPTER V.

Prison Anecdotes—Increased severities—Communications from Prison—Just reliance on popular feeling—Perilous situation of the Governor—Domiciliary visit—Lord Carhampton .....	31
--	----

## CHAPTER VI.

	Page
Interesting occurrence—French Fleet in Bantry Bay—Alarm of Prison Authorities—Devoted Fidelity of an Irish Peasant— State Informers.....	38

## CHAPTER VII.

Funeral Processions—Opposed by the Civil Authorities—Murmurs of the People—Warm display of public feeling—Harvest— Fresh Proscriptions—Wanton Conflagrations—Church Militant —Vindictive outrage.....	47
--	----

## CHAPTER VIII.

Prison Scene—Petition to the Throne for dismissal of Ministers....	52
--	----

## CHAPTER IX.

Crowded Prisons—Ministerial Economy—Enlargement of some of the Prisoners of State—Ultra Loyalty—Consequences—Gene- ral Lawless.....	56
---	----

## CHAPTER X.

Mr. Secretary Cooke—Momentary hopes of Conciliation—Frus- trated—Irish Exiles in Prussia—Foreign States—Injurious policy of Britain.....	59
--	----

## CHAPTER XI.

View of the United Irish System towards the close of the year 1797 —Transportation without trial—Friendly communications from Confidential Departments of the State—Irritating measures of Government—Torture—Motion of Lord Moira in the British House of Peers for an Address to the Throne—Rejected—In the Irish, to the Viceroy—Rejected—Motion of Mr. Fox in the British House of Commons for an Address to the Throne —Rejected—Determination to goad Ireland to resistance— Preparations on either side for a hostile struggle .....	70
---	----



## CHAPTER XII.

Page

Lord Edward Fitzgerald .....	77
------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER XIII.

Commencement of Hostilities—First Military Movements—Aylmer commander in Kildare—Encampment of the Army of the Union .....	83
--	----

## CHAPTER XIV.

Opening of the Wexford campaign—Defeat of the British at Oulard —At Enniscorthy—Retreat to Wexford—Advance of the United Forces—Deputation from Wexford to the United Camp —Destruction of the Advanced Guard of General Fawcett's Army—Second Deputation from Wexford, with Proposals for surrendering the town—Evacuation of Wexford by the British Army—Occupation of it by the United Troops—Further suc- cesses—Alarm of the Irish Government—Generous Appeal of Mr. Fox to the British Senate—Augmentation of the Army....	87
--	----

## CHAPTER XV.

State of Leinster—Hill of Tara—Battle—Defeat, and rout of the United Forces—Aylmer in Kildare.....	93
---	----

## CHAPTER XVI.

General state of the country after the commencement of Hostilities —Illustrative Anecdotes .....	96
---	----

## CHAPTER XVII.

Local state of Ulster—Early Organisation—Subsequent cause of supineness—Yeomanry Corps.....	109
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Effects of an Organised System on the Population of Ulster—Lowry and Magenis—Their exertions to promote internal tranquillity —Barbarous Pastimes of the Soldiery.....	114
--	-----



## CHAPTER XIX.

	Page
Antrim and Down—Rising of the United Irishmen in Antrim— Henry Joy M'Cracken, Commander—Battle of Antrim— Defeat of the United Forces.....	120

## CHAPTER XX.

Assembling of the United Troops in Down—Action near Saintfield —Attack on Portaferry—Battle of Ballynahinch—Total Sup- pression of the United Irishmen in Ulster.....	129
---	-----

APPENDIX .....	141
----------------	-----

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE following sketch of interesting events connected with the fate of an unfortunate country, with the history of which the writer has been but too familiar, formed the amusement of a solitary hour, when the mind, feeling a melancholy consolation in retracing the scenes of the past, was animated with the desire of conveying a lesson for the future, and rescuing from misrepresentation the memory of men whose virtues will live when the names of their oppressors shall be forgotten.

If the scenes of the past as they float on the memory are recorded with brevity, it is that they may be as simple as they are sincere. They will be recognised by some, the few survivors of their country's misfortunes, who have shared in her calamities but not disgraced her cause, and they will be perused by those for whose instruction they were intended with feelings of filial attachment and national respect.

The present state of Ireland bears so strongly on the past, that in delineating the one we seem to portray the character

of both. Proud in her sons and rich in her soil, Ireland seemed destined by Nature to hold an imposing station on the chart of the world. Whether for the more peaceful pursuits of commerce or the boisterous scenes of war, Nature was lavish in the gifts which afforded facilities for both; while the genius of her people, corresponding with the fertility of her soil, appeared formed for every pursuit where science or glory might lead. I pass over the days of Ireland's ancient greatness—proud but painful the remembrance—and if I trace her present wrongs, it is neither to irritate feelings perhaps too susceptible, nor to widen the breach which those wrongs have extended, to the ruin of domestic peace and the brightest prospect of national independence.

Amid what may be termed the modern revolutions of the world, Ireland stands pre-eminent; alike conspicuous in her sufferings and virtues; her devoted attachment to the faith of her ancestors, her unshaken fidelity, and unconquerable love of freedom. Neither the invidious policy of her new masters in their cautious exclusion of the natives from every station of emolument or honour, the degradation of the noble, and the exaltation of the mean; neither the base excitements to domestic fraud, with the alluring boon for filial impiety,\* nor the barbarous enactments to impede the expansion of the human mind and check the progress of the

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\* See enactments of the Penal Code.

human race; neither, nor any, of these measures were successful in the policy designed; for the Omnipotent hand which chastened the fallen, supported the weak, gave energy to the feeble, roused the spirit which oppression would have laid, and extending with increasing numbers intellectual wisdom, imbued the opening mind with the rays of hope, and breathed courage and confidence to a desponding people. Such a phenomenon in the political world could not have escaped the observation of the more reflecting portion of mankind, and especially of that portion which had been rendered dissatisfied by recent attempts to abridge their civil rights through the corrupt and increasing influence of ministerial power. Add to these the excitement of popular feeling, roused by the widely spreading sentiments of freedom which, having successfully struggled in the new world, now burst with irresistible force upon the old, and swept like a torrent every barrier opposed to its impetuous career.

The inhabitants of Ireland had been unhappily divided, and it was the policy of those who governed to encourage that division, and to weaken by intestine strife; but as the common wrongs of the people required a common co-operation of resistance, the evils which they had to contend with could only be successfully opposed by the united efforts of all.

That illustrious band of citizens, the Irish volunteers, who had first embodied themselves to repel foreign invasion, and in the hour of England's weakness presented a powerful



host to support her throne, had become an object of jealousy and alarm : their services were no longer required ; their generous conduct in the day of peril was forgotten, and the arms which had protected her coast and secured her throne were wrested from the hands that had borne them with triumph. England was strong, and Ireland was no longer wanting to her safety :—hence the monopoly of the one viewed with alarm the increasing strength of the other, which by the growing union of the people was rapidly advancing. The old motto was again revived, and “ *Divide, et impera* ” reprinted in characters too obvious to be mistaken. Thus was Ireland again doomed to the influence of that fatal policy from which she had been just emerging, and which had long warred against her happiness and peace ; but the blow was struck, and this last act of national insult only served to enkindle a fire which the hand of oppression soon fanned into a flame.

# PERSONAL NARRATIVE

## OF THE

# IRISH REBELLION.

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### CHAPTER I.

*National Indignation on the Removal of Lord Fitzwilliam from the Administration of Ireland—Opinions of Mr. Grattan—Persecutions in Armagh—Lord Gosford—Rapid Progress of the United Irish Societies.*

IT is not my present intention to enter into a minute detail of the rise and progress of the United Irish Societies. The political measures connected with those societies, and the eventful consequences which followed their suppression, have long been before the public eye, and form a leading feature in Irish history for the last thirty years. My object is chiefly the recital of those occurrences which I myself have witnessed; and though they may not perhaps appear important in the detail, they are connected with a period the most eventful in the annals of my country, and which a life chequered with a variety of fortune has afforded me but too many opportunities of recording.

Prior to Lord Fitzwilliam's appointment to the government of Ireland in 1795, the United Irish Societies, though progressive, had been slow in march and comparatively limited in numbers, but on the removal of that popular viceroy, and the nomination of Lord Camden as his successor, the system immediately assumed a more general and imposing appearance. The wise and conciliatory measures of Lord Fitzwilliam, and the character of the men who were associated with him in office, had tended to raise hopes and confidence in the Irish mind, which, elevated to the highest

point of expectancy, was as rapidly depressed by his recall ; and, generally speaking, every county, city, and town in Ireland expressed in public meeting, and in the undisguised language of the heart, the most poignant regret at the removal of the one viceroy, and the most gloomy forebodings on the appointment of the other.\*

I was present at a meeting of the freeholders of Antrim, convened on this occasion. It was one of the most imposing scenes ever witnessed in our county. Presbyterian, Catholic, and Protestant, all felt alike interested in the approaching fate of their country, and all were equally indignant at the national insult which had been offered. One feeling pervaded the whole assembly : it was a feeling of sorrow and deep indignation. The judges of assize had opened their commission at Carrickfergus, and were proceeding on the business of the county, when the meeting of the freeholders was announced. In a moment the court-house was deserted ; the entire grand jury quitted their chamber, and proceeded in a body to join the freeholders, and unite with their countrymen in a manly and dignified expression of national feeling.

Such was the general sentiment expressed throughout Ireland on this occasion. I have selected the eloquent and energetic reply of Mr. Grattan to the address of the Catholics of Dublin presented to him on the 14th of March, 1795, which excited a considerable sensation at that period:—

“In supporting you,” said Mr. Grattan, “I support the Protestant : we have but one interest and one honour ; and whoever gives privileges to you gives vigour to all. The Protestant already begins to perceive it ; a late attack has rallied the scattered spirits of the country from the folly of religious schism to the recollection of national honour, and a nation’s feuds are lost in a nation’s resentment. Your emancipation *will* pass—rely on it your emancipation *must* pass. It may be death to one viceroy—it will be the peace-offering of another : and the laurel may be torn from the

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\* March 28th.—“This day was observed as a day of *national mourning* by the inhabitants of this town (Belfast), on account of Lord Fitzwilliam’s departure. There was not a shop or counting-house open during the whole day ; all was one scene of *sullen indignation*.—*Northern Star*.



dead brow of one governor, to be craftily converted into the olive of his successor.

“Let me advise you by no means to postpone the consideration of your fortunes till after the war; rather let Britain receive the benefit of your zeal during the exigency which demands it; and you yourselves, while you are fighting to preserve the blessings of a constitution, have really and *bonâ fide* those blessings. My wish is that you should be free *now*; there is no other policy which is not low and little. Let us at once *instantly embrace*, and *greatly emancipate*. On this principle I mean to introduce your Bill, with your permission, immediately after the recess.

“You are pleased to speak of the confidence and power with which, for a moment, I was supposed to have been possessed. When his Majesty’s ministers were pleased to resort to our support, they took us with the incumbrance of our reputation, and with all our debts and mortgages which we owed to our country. To have accepted a share of confidence and council, without a view to private advantage, will not meet, I hope, the disapprobation of my country; but to have accepted that share without any view to public advantage, would have been refinement on the folly of ambition. Measures, therefore, public measures and arrangements, and that which is now disputed, were stipulated by us; were promised in one quarter, and, with assurances, they were not resisted in another.

“In the service of government, under his Excellency’s administration, we directed our attention to two great objects—the kingdom and the empire. We obtained certain beneficial laws; the discovery and reformation of certain abuses, and were in progress to reform more—we obtained a great force, and a great supply, with the consent and confidence of the people. These were not the measures of courtiers, they were the measures of ministers.

“His Excellency Lord Fitzwilliam may boast that he offered to the empire the affections of millions; a better aid to the war than his enemies can furnish, who have forfeited those affections, and put themselves in their place. So decidedly have the measures of Ireland served the empire, that those who were concerned in them might appeal from the cabals of the British cabinet to the sense of the British nation. I know of no cause afforded for the displeasure of

the English cabinet; but if services done to Ireland are crimes which cannot be atoned for by exertions for the empire, I must lament the gloomy prospects of both kingdoms, and receive a discharge from the service of government, as the only honour an English minister can confer on an Irish subject.

"I conceive the continuance of Lord Fitzwilliam as necessary for the prosperity of this kingdom; his firm integrity is formed to correct, his mild manners to reconcile, and his private example to discountenance a progress of vulgar and rapid pollution; if he is to retire, I condole with my country. For myself, the pangs on that occasion I should feel, on rendering up my small portion of ministerial breath, would be little, were it not for the gloomy prospects afforded by those dreadful guardians who are likely to succeed. I tremble at the return to power of your old task-masters; that combination which galled the country with its tyranny, insulted her by its manners, exhausted her by its rapacity, and slandered her by its malice. Should such a combination, at once inflamed as it must be now by the favour of the British court, and by the reprobation of the Irish people, return to power, I have no hesitation to say, that they will *extinguish Ireland*, or Ireland *must remove them*; it is not your cause only, but that of the nation. I find the country already *committed* in the struggle: I beg to be *committed along with her, and to abide the issue of her fortunes*.

"I should have expected that there had been a wisdom and faith in some quarter of another country, that would have prevented such catastrophe; but I know it is no proof of that wisdom to take the taxes, continue the abuses, damp the zeal, and dash away the affections of so important a member of the empire as the people of Ireland; and when this country came forward, cordial and confident, with the offering of her treasure and blood, and resolute to stand or fall with the British nation, it is, I say, no proof of wisdom or generosity to select that moment to plant a dagger in her heart. But whatsoever shall be the event, I will adhere to her interests to the *last moment of my life*."

The prophetic fears of Grattan were but too fully verified, for Ireland was soon "*extinguished*" as a nation. The disappointed hopes of the people, their despair of legislative



redress, the insulting severity of the Camden administration, the cruel and wanton religious persecutions of Armagh, where 10,000 unoffending Catholic inhabitants were driven from their homes at the point of the bayonet or by the torch of the incendiary, and this barbarous proscription, if not encouraged, at least not opposed by the government or local authorities, first led the inhabitants of Ulster into a *general* association for self-defence.

The following quotations from the speech of Lord Gosford, governor of the county of Armagh, at a meeting of magistrates assembled there on the 28th of December, 1795, will describe the situation of that unfortunate country, in language much more impressive than any I can command:—

“It is no secret, that a persecution, accompanied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty which have in all ages distinguished that dreadful calamity, is now raging in this county; neither age nor sex, etc., is sufficient to excite mercy, much less to afford protection. The only crime which the wretched objects of this ruthless persecution are charged with, is a crime indeed of easy proof; it is simply a profession of the Roman Catholic faith, or an intimate connexion with a person professing this faith. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of this new species of delinquency, and the sentence they have denounced is equally concise and terrible—it is nothing less than a confiscation of *all property*, and an *immediate banishment*. It would be extremely painful, and surely unnecessary, to detail the horrors that attend the execution of so rude and tremendous a proscription—a proscription that certainly exceeds, in the comparative number of those it consigns to ruin and misery, every example that ancient or modern history can supply; for when have we heard, or in what story of human cruelties have we read, of *more than half the inhabitants of a populous country* deprived at one blow of the means, as well as the fruits of their industry, and driven, in the midst of an inclement season, to seek a shelter for themselves and their helpless families where chance may guide them! This is no exaggerated picture of the horrid scenes now acting in this county, yet surely it is sufficient to awaken sentiments of indignation and compassion in the coldest bosoms. These horrors are now acting with *impunity*; the spirit of impartial justice (without

which law is nothing better than an instrument of tyranny) has for a time disappeared in this county, and the supineness of the magistracy of Armagh is become a common topic of conversation in every corner of the kingdom.

"I am," said his lordship, "as true a Protestant as any gentleman in this room. I inherit a property which my family derived under a Protestant title, and with the blessing of God I will maintain that title to the utmost of my power. I will never consent to make a sacrifice of Protestant ascendancy to Catholic claims, with whatever menace they may be urged, or however speciously or invidiously supported. Conscious of my sincerity in this public declaration, which I do not make unadvisedly, but as the result of mature deliberation, I defy the paltry insinuations that malice or party spirit may suggest. I know my own heart, and I should despise myself if, under *any intimidation*, I could close my eyes against any such scenes as present themselves on every side, or my ears against the complaints of a *persecuted people*."

Lord Gosford was one of the most extensive land proprietors in Ulster. His loyalty no man will presume to impeach, and his candid *exposé* of the Orange atrocities in Armagh, the most devoted partisan of the cause has never dared to question. All the foregoing circumstances combined had a powerful effect in alienating the minds of the people from every feeling of confidence and every hope of justice from the government of the country, and the numbers of United Irishmen hourly increased, until nearly the whole active population was committed in this universal Association. It was impossible to resist the national impulse; the most elevated in rank and fortune embraced the system, and some of those, who have since held confidential situations in the state, boasting their exclusive loyalty to the throne, were, at that period, amongst the most zealous supporters of "*Union and Truth*."\*

Every measure that could tend to expand the system, or to rouse the national feeling, was called into action. Green, the national colour, and as the venerable Betagh termed it, "the fancy colour of the Diety," was almost universally worn; few appeared without this badge of national distinction. The drooping manufactures of the country were for a moment

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\* The motto, or countersign, of the United Irish Societies.



revived, and the velvet of Genoa and the silks of Florence were rivalled through the improved taste of the Dublin artist, whose looms, though now unemployed, were, at that period, barely sufficient for the domestic consumption. A green velvet stock, or a silk robe, with a shamrock device, were the emblems of national feeling; and the former was not unfrequently presented to the youthful patriot by the fair daughter of Erin, as the pledge of a more tender regard. The enthusiasm of the females even exceeded the ardour of the men; in many of the higher circles, and in all the rustic festivities, *that* youth met a cold and forbidding reception from the partner of his choice, who, either from apathy or timidity, had not yet subscribed to the test of union.

As the vigilance of government increased, and the system of union became more pregnant with danger (for the insurrection act had now attached to it the penalty of death), the exertions of the people were redoubled. Music, to which the Irish are so peculiarly attached, and which, if I may use the expression, speaks the native language of their soul, was most successfully resorted to on this occasion; and the popular songs\* of the day, suited to the temper of the times, were admirably calculated to rouse the national spirit, and elevate the mind to a contempt of danger and the most enthusiastic feelings which love of liberty and of country could inspire. No wonder, then, that the system of union became formidable, and that public sympathy for those who suffered in the cause was general and sincere; while the man, who with firmness encountered the privations of a prison, was regarded as a martyr to truth and the liberties of his country. Of this number, young and enthusiastic, it was my fortune to be one. Educated in the province of Ulster, I imbibed early sentiments of independence, which, though they have marred my best prospects in life, and entailed misfortunes incalculable on my family, I trust I shall never abandon. Fox, Grattan, Curran, and the illustrious patriots of their day, have lived in vain, if the present generation of Irishmen should blush to avow the sentiments which they maintained. Had my mind been ambitious, few of my contemporaries had fairer prospects of advancement; but I preferred Ireland, in her poverty and distress, to the splendour

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\* See Appendix.

which is wrung from her miseries and misfortunes; and whether in the dungeon or on the mountain's heath, I never envied the feelings of the man who owed his fortune or his safety to the abandonment of her cause.

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## CHAPTER II.

### *Arrests in Ulster—Lord Castlereagh.*

IT was in the autumn of the year 1796 that government commenced active operations against the United Irish Societies, by the arrest of those men who were either considered the decided partisans of the cause, or suspected of being favourable to the system of union. The principal performer in this scene was, of all men, the last who could have been supposed ambitious of exhibiting in such a character. A man whose influence and example had so powerful an effect in rallying the youth of his native province, that all seemed proud to emulate the virtues which had elevated him to a distinguished situation, through the confidence and partiality of his countrymen. Strange, indeed, that Lord Castlereagh should have been the selected tool of the Camden administration, to drag the companions of his youth, and the early associates of his political fame, from the peaceful bosom of their families to the horrors of an Irish Bastile. Ireland witnessed his delinquency with sorrow, but she had not anticipated the extent of the evils which awaited her, in the dismemberment of her power, and the extinction of her independence by a legislative union with Britain.

I was myself the first victim to the political delinquency of Lord Castlereagh. On the 16th of September, 1796, while yet in my eighteenth year, I was arrested by him on a charge of high treason. The manner of my arrest was as novel as mysterious, and the hand which executed it the last from which I could have suspected an act of unkindness. Lord Castlereagh was the personal friend of my father, who admired him as the early advocate of civil and religious liberty. He was a member of the illustrious band of Irish volunteers; and his name to this hour stands recorded amongst the most conspicuous characters who formed the first great political

association in Ulster, for that redress of grievances which the united exertions of the people only could obtain.\*

When, in the year 1790, the representation for Down was contested, and the independence of that great and populous county threatened, through the powerful influence of the Downshire family and a combination of local interests hostile to the rights of the people, Lord Castlereagh, then the Honourable Robert Stewart, was selected by his countrymen for his talents and his patriotism; and after the most obstinate political contest ever witnessed in Ireland, he was triumphantly returned to Parliament, supported not only by the suffrages, but by the pecuniary contributions of the friends of civil and religious liberty. On this memorable occasion Lord Castlereagh publicly subscribed to a test, which, in expressing the sense of his constituents, marked out the line of his parliamentary duty, pledging himself, in language the most unequivocal, to the unceasing pursuit of parliamentary reform. The penal laws at this period operated against my father's personal exercise of the elective franchise, but neither his fortune nor his best exertions were unemployed in the service of his friend. What then must have been my astonishment when I found myself a prisoner in the hands of the man whom I had been early taught to regard as a model of patriotism!

The evening preceding my arrest had been passed in one of those gay and cheerful assemblies for which at that period the north of Ireland was distinguished, and in which Lord Castlereagh and other members of his family not unfrequently mingled. The recollection of those early scenes is still fresh in my remembrance, and the delightful entertainment they afforded was a true criterion of the polished manners and the social feeling of the inhabitants of my native town.† Accompanying my father on the following morning on a short excursion on horseback, we were met by Lord Castlereagh, who accosted us with his usual courtesy and politeness. We had proceeded up the street together, when having reached the house of his noble relative, the Marquis of Hertford, we were about to take leave of his lordship—"I regret," said he, addressing my father, "that your son cannot

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\* See Appendix, No. II.

† Lisburn.



accompany you;" conducting me at the same moment through the outer gate, which, to my inexpressible astonishment, was instantly closed, and I found myself surrounded by a military guard. I expostulated, and in no very measured language, against what I considered a foul and treacherous proceeding, and with warmth I demanded that the gate should be reopened, and my father admitted. This, after some deliberation, was assented to. My father entered; he looked first on me, then sternly on Castlereagh, and with a firm and determined composure, inquired the cause of my arrest. "High treason!" replied his lordship. Our interview was short; my father was not permitted to remain. It may well be conceived at this moment what were his emotions: he bade me adieu with a proud but a tender feeling; and whilst my hand, locked in his, felt the fond pressure of paternal love, his eye darted a look of defiance, and his soul swelled indignant with conscious superiority over the apostate patriot and insidious friend.

My father pursued his intended route, too sorrowful to return to his family, and too proud to betray the feelings which agitated his heart. It may appear somewhat strange that a man who bore the liveliest attachment to his domestic circle, and who was to me not only the affectionate parent, but also the companion and friend, should in a moment like the present, the most painful perhaps he had *yet* encountered, proceed on his business with so much apparent composure. But he was a man of no ordinary cast: to the liveliest sensibility were associated the firmest characteristics of mind; his intellectual powers were strong, and the gifts of nature had been improved by an education of the most liberal stamp. Affluent in circumstances, and connected by the most respectable links to society, he was possessed of much popularity, and retained the confidence and esteem of his countrymen through a long and an honourable life. But his pride was innate, and subsequent persecution and misfortune could never bend it.

My horse was led home by a faithful domestic, but to that home I never returned: nor was a numerous, and till then a happy family ever again congregated within its walls. Persecution and misfortune followed in rapid succession. This was the first blow which had been struck against our peace, and it was aimed with a deadly hand. The melan-

choly appearance of the old servant, who clung with his arms round the neck of my horse, whilst his head reclined sorrowfully on the crest—the gloom and the mystery with which the occurrence seemed altogether enveloped, excited alarming conjectures in the minds of the family, which the honest domestic had not the courage to explain. But the mystery was soon unfolded.

Lord Castlereagh had only performed half his duty ; he had made good his “caption,” but he wanted evidence to convict his prisoner, or to give a plausible pretext for the extraordinary measures he had exercised towards me. He entered my father’s house accompanied by a military guard, and placing a sentinel at the door of each apartment, he presented a pistol to the breast of my brother John, a fine-spirited youth of fourteen, whom he compelled to accompany him in his search, opening successively every locker, from which he carried off such papers as he thought proper to select, together with my pistols. My brother conducted himself on this occasion with a firmness and composure which could hardly have been expected from a lad of his years. One of my sisters evinced the most heroic courage : she was my junior, and with the gentlest possessed the noblest soul ; she has been the solace of her family in all subsequent afflictions, and seemed to have been given as a blessing by Heaven, to counterpoise the ills they were doomed to suffer. But the feelings of my mother were totally overpowered by the scene. She had just been informed of my arrest, and now saw our peaceful home in possession of a military force. Maternal affection created imaginary dangers, and in the most energetic language she prayed Lord Castlereagh to permit her to visit my prison, and to grant even a momentary interview with her son. This he had the good sense and firmness to decline, and in communicating the matter to me in the course of our evening’s conversation, I expressed my approval of his decision. But my mother felt otherwise : the afflicted state of her mind precluded that reflection which should have rendered her sensible of the propriety of Lord Castlereagh’s refusal. Agitated and disappointed, her gentle but lofty spirit was roused, and burying maternal grief in the indignant feeling of her soul, “I was wrong,” she exclaimed, “to appeal to a heart that never felt the tie of parental affection—your Lordship is *not a father*.” She pronounced

this with a tone and an emphasis so feeling and so powerful, that even the mind of Castlereagh was not insensible to its force, and he immediately retired with his guard.

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### CHAPTER III.

*Popular excitement—Hostile intentions towards Lord Castlereagh—Suppressed—State Prisoners conducted to the Capital—Lodged in Prison.*

THE intelligence of my arrest was quickly communicated. The novelty of the scene, the high rank and station of the principal actor, and the hurried bustle of the soldiery, all tended to excite considerable agitation in the minds of the populace, whose numbers every moment increased, and our hitherto peaceful town bore all the appearance of an approaching storm.

General Nugent, who at that time held the principal command in the northern district, entered the apartment where I was confined, accompanied by the officers of his staff. He considered it, perhaps, essential to the public safety, to see that a prisoner of state should be guarded with all due care, in a moment of popular excitement: but whatever motive might have operated on his mind, I am not to suppose that idle curiosity bore any share. His visit was attended with considerable parade, and a good deal of that empty pomposity, more characteristic of the fop than the soldier. If I might judge by the result, it certainly was not intended to lessen the restrictions of my situation. A cold and distant salute passed between us. He eyed me with a minuteness which I considered rather uncourteous. I retorted his glance, and the General and his staff presently withdrew. In a little time, however, I found myself under the surveillance of an additional guard, and two grenadiers were now posted *within* my apartment.

For some hours I was confined to a front chamber, overlooking one of the principal streets; and as the populace continued to increase in number, and frequently demanded to see me, I was obliged to present myself at an open window, to receive and reply to their expressions of sympathy and kindness. Strong personal resentment against



the author of my arrest was expressed in language too unequivocal to be mistaken, and the soldiers who formed my guard (chiefly of the Irish militia) evinced no disposition hostile to the sentiments which my countrymen expressed. The feelings of the army, were, in fact, at that period considerably identified with those of the people; and it was evident, from the rapid changes of the guard, and the apparent distrust which it was impossible to conceal, that the commander of the northern district had not the most implicit reliance on the devotion of his troops.

Considerable apprehensions were excited in the minds of my townsmen, lest the papers which Lord Castlereagh had carried from my father's house, and to which he seemed to attach much importance, should contain any matter of a political tendency, likely to commit me with the government of the country. Two gentlemen, on whose faith and honour I could rely, addressed me from the crowd beneath my window, and with much anxiety inquired whether I had cause for apprehension on this subject. I assured them that I had none, that my mind was perfectly at ease, that I had never committed a political act which conscience would not approve, and the laws of my country justify. The inquiries of these gentlemen were heard by the crowd, and my reply was distinctly pronounced, both in the hearing of the guard and the multitude. The gentlemen withdrew, and they were cheered as they passed along.

An order was shortly after issued to have me removed from the front to a rear apartment of the house, excluding all intercourse or communication with the people. In this gloomy apartment, and scarcely an hour from the time I had entered it, two grenadiers of the regiment of —— addressed me with a feeling and emotion which evinced their sincerity; —“*Now, sir,*” said they, “*now is your time; our company is on guard, our comrades are faithful; you have nothing to fear; no sentinel will stop you.*” I was surprised at this generous and devoted offer of the guard; but even had I apprehended personal danger, consideration for them would have led me to decline it. I soon learnt, however, that a communication existed between the soldiery and the people; and also, that after my friends had retired from the street, satisfied with the assurance I had given them, a rumour was again circulated, that Lord Castlereagh was in possession of

papers which involved the safety of his prisoner ; and that, under this impression, some of the most daring and determined *had resolved to intercept him on his return from Belfast*, whither he had proceeded accompanied by Lord Westmeath, for the purpose of conducting the arrest of some leading political characters.

I had now no possible mode of direct external communication, situated, as I have already remarked, in a remote apartment, and excluded from all intercourse, save with the sentinels who kept guard in my chamber, with whom I communicated with the frankness which I thought their late bold and generous solicitude for my liberation merited. I exhorted them, in the most forcible language, to a peaceful and orderly demeanour ; and in the most emphatic terms I protested against any proceeding which might, even in the remotest degree, involve the personal safety of Lord Castlereagh. My sentiments were conveyed to the people : my remonstrance had the desired effect. The noble lord returned, and he returned in safety ; and thus was preserved the life of that man whose genius was to direct the future destinies of the empire—who, elevated to the summit of power, betrayed the land of his birth, bartered her rights for an empty name, and preferred the hollow bauble and the glittering toy to the interests and the glory of his country.

It was now evening—fatigued, and apparently much dispirited, Lord Castlereagh entered my apartment. To those who were acquainted with him, it is unnecessary to say that he possessed the most fascinating manners and engaging address, heightened by a personal appearance peculiarly attractive, and certainly not in character with the duties of the office which he had that day assumed ; for though national pride was extinct in the soul, the gifts of nature were not effaced from the form, nor the polished manners of the gentleman forgotten in the uncourteous garb of the officer of police. He regretted that in his absence I had been subjected to the painful restraint of an additional guard, which it was not his desire should have been placed within my apartment. A slight repast had been prepared, of which he pressed me to partake. The wine was generous, his lordship was polite, and the prisoner of state seemed for a moment forgotten in the kinder feelings of the earlier friend.

“ I have had much fatigue to-day,” observed his lordship ;



and, with a seeming disposition to engage me in conversation, he added, "We have made some important arrests." "Permit me to inquire the names of those arrested: my own situation naturally leads me to sympathise with that of others." "We have arrested Nelson—do you know him?" "Know him!" I replied, "I know him, and respect his worth; a man of talent and devoted patriotism; an honest citizen; the warm and disinterested friend; and, give me leave to add, my lord, the early advocate of his country's rights." His lordship also *knew* him, and I thought I could perceive a something associated with Nelson's name which recalled to the mind of Lord Castlereagh recollections which, under present circumstances, he would perhaps rather have suppressed. After a momentary pause, "We have arrested Russell." "Russell!" said I, "then the soul of honour is captive—is Russell a prisoner?" Lord Castlereagh was silent; he filled his glass—he presented me with wine. Our conversation had been embarrassing: we changed the subject. "May I beg to know, my lord, what are the intentions of government towards me and my fellow-prisoners?" "You will be immediately conducted to the capital," was the reply; "his Excellency and council will decide the rest."

The guard was now announced, the escort was under arms, and the polite courtier, with a courtesy which he rarely abandoned, placed me under charge of a squadron of dragoons. On presenting me to the guard, he desired that I should be treated with every indulgence consistent with their duty and the safe keeping of the prisoner, and in this I believe he was perfectly sincere.

The apartment in which we had dined was in the rear of the building, and had served as my prison from an early hour in the morning till about six in the afternoon. On entering a carriage, I was surprised at the immense multitude which thronged the streets—a dense and nearly impassable crowd. Lord Castlereagh gave orders to the cavalry to clear the way. It was difficult to proceed, and for a moment doubtful whether a passage could be effected; order, however, was not interrupted. The people at first observed the most profound silence; they seemed doubtful what course to pursue; they looked wistfully on the prisoner, then at each other—a burst of national feeling broke from the crowd—an instantaneous cheer followed—a thousand hats waved in the

air. I waved my hat, and cheered my countrymen in return—a few individuals were pressed by the cavalry, but no serious injury occurred. On reaching the square, I observed nine carriages strongly guarded. These contained prisoners, and were ranged in regular succession. Mine formed the tenth. The escort which conducted me had received orders to lead; we drove rapidly to the van, and the whole cavalcade was instantly in motion.

In the small towns through which we passed, great anxiety was evinced to see and communicate with the prisoners, but the cavalry kept the people at a distance, and on some occasions acted with rudeness towards them; the infantry, however, were uniformly disposed to kindness, and omitted no opportunity to evince feelings which could not be mistaken.

It was midnight when we arrived at the town of Newry. Our carriages were drawn up in front of the principal hotel. A small squadron of dragoons only remained with us, while the main body retired to feed their horses, after a long and fatiguing march. The garrison of the town had not been apprised of our approach, and no relief was in readiness. The prisoners wanted refreshment, but none was allowed them. It was here that the generous feelings of our fair countrywomen were portrayed in native colouring. The young and lovely daughters of the "maitre d'hotel" hastened to present us with refreshments. This was opposed by the guards; but while they refused admission within their lines, they durst not raise their hands against female innocence and beauty. Two of those interesting girls approached my carriage; this they could only effect through the hazardous expedient of passing under the cavalry horses, which evinced more gentleness than their riders. They extended their arms with difficulty, and pressed me to partake of the refreshments which they presented; while I, in admiration of their heroic courage, forgot the privations which they came to relieve, and inhaled the sweeter delight which the presence of virtue and loveliness affords. Heroic countrywomen! if courage had been wanting to animate our cause, your example would have taught us firmness.

Our escort was soon refreshed, and as the commander seemed to consider time of importance, we left the more fatigued troops behind, and proceeded with every possible expedition to cross the once formidable barrier which nature



has placed between Leinster and our native province. The roads at that time were difficult of passage, and our advance was much impeded by the darkness of the night, and the steep ascents, over which our carriages could only proceed at a slow and slackened pace ; it was therefore late on the night of the 17th when we reached the capital. We drove direct to the castle. Our arrival was unlooked for ; no arrangements had been made for our reception. The officers of the several departments of the castle had retired. There was no authority to receive us ; none to whom the commander of the escort could consign his prisoners. We remained for more than two hours in this situation, drawn up and guarded in our respective carriages, without being permitted the slightest intercourse with each other. During this time all was still and quiet within the precincts of the castle, but at length the return of the messenger was announced who had been despatched to the residence of the chief secretary of state, and a council was hastily convened, before whom a few of my fellow-prisoners underwent a ridiculous examination, which only tended to betray the indecision of the council, and to expose the weakness which all their assumed courage and importance could not conceal. After a little further delay in telling over our numbers, calling out our respective names and places of abode, the council broke up, and we were conducted to prison.

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## CHAPTER IV.

*Committal of State Prisoners by Judge Boyd—Prison scenes—Magisterial atrocity—Severe restrictions imposed on the Prisoners—Ingenious contrivance to transmit communications from without—Partial relaxation of severities—Lord O'Neill.*

It was late when we arrived at this mansion of human misery, under a strong escort of British dragoons. The stillness of the night ; the solitary gloom of the prison ; the echo of feet as we passed through the long vaulted corridor ; the alternate clank of a chain and the grating of the dungeon door, which opened to entomb the victim, were all calculated to inspire sentiments of horror in a mind tainted with guilt or imbued

with crime. And was this to be the residence of those whose *crime* was love of country, and whose *guilt* was attachment to the human race?

The brave veteran who commanded the escort, on handing over his prisoners, seemed surprised at the composure with which men approached what in this day of terror was considered an inevitable fate. "'Twere pity," he whispered, "they should perish, for guilt does not assume the air of fortitude which marks their deportment. Farewell, gentlemen," said he, with an expression of countenance which bespoke a benevolent heart, "I have executed a painful duty, but I hope not with too rigorous an observance." As he concluded the last sentence he opened a small silver snuff-box which he had for some time held in his hand; I was standing near him;—he extended it towards me—I bowed, and taking a pinch from the box, "It is grateful," said I, "after a tedious night and a dreary march." He looked on me, I thought, with an eye of paternal kindness, and presenting the box, "Accept this," said he, "and may its contents never be exhausted in prison."

As no preparation had been made for our reception, we passed the first night of our imprisonment as under such circumstances might naturally have been expected. We slept, however, soundly; and though not on beds of roses, our pillows were free from thorns. We were escorted on the following morning (Sunday), with considerable military parade, through the principal streets of the capital, to the residence of Judge Boyd, where, for the first time since our arrest, we had free communication with each other; and whilst our committals were being prepared, which occupied a considerable portion of time, we enjoyed some amusement at the expense of this functionary of the law; a man not more remarkable for the correctness of his judicial conduct than for the virtues which adorned his private life.

Our committals having been prepared, we were ordered to stand forth, and answer to our respective names. "Samuel Nelson."—"Here." "You stand charged with high treason against——"—"Whom, my lord?" "Suffer me to go on, sir."—"With great respect, I wish to set your lordship right." "I am right, sir"—"And *sober*, too," whispered Nelson, with a good-humoured smile, and a significant expression directed to us, which, in despite of our situation, excited a

feeling of merriment impossible to repress. The gravity of poor Russell, however, seemed to have been offended. No man regarded etiquette and the punctilios of politeness more. He looked solemn, stroked up his fine black hair, and with a sweetness of countenance peculiarly his own, and in a gently modulated but sufficiently audible tone of voice he begged of his friend Nelson to respect the dignity of the Bench, and the personal virtues of the learned judge. Russell's admonition had the desired effect; Nelson bowed respectfully, and with a half-suppressed smile assured his friend that he esteemed the learned judge the most *chaste* and *temperate* of mankind. Though Boyd could not have distinctly heard what passed, it was evident that he was not perfectly free from embarrassment, and as he evinced no disposition to create any unnecessary delay, our committals were hastily run over, our names were rapidly called, and under the sanction of legal authority we were reconducted to prison.

To those who have been familiar with prisons (under Irish "lettres de cachet"), the present will afford nothing novel. The interior of *our* prison was of the most gloomy description, and calculated, as far as the extended structure would admit, to gratify the feelings of the despotic mind in the solitary confinement of the prisoner. Pen, ink, and paper were prohibited; all intercourse with our friends was denied; and when at length we were indulged with any external communication, our letters were uniformly presented to us unsealed, having first been perused by the secretary of state. I shall never forget the sensation I experienced on the first communication from my family, conveyed to me by letter from my father, which also bore the signature of the sister whom I loved. My father's letter was guarded, of course, for he addressed it under cover to the secretary of state, but it was couched in language which did honour to the feelings of his heart and the firmness of his mind.

The aspect of affairs every day became more serious; the union of the people more formidable to the government, and the government more hostile to the rights of the people. Numbers of Irishmen were hourly incarcerated, to gratify personal resentment, to lull the fears of the alarmists, or to afford a pretext for the adoption of those measures which a weak and a wicked policy had devised. Some were also



victims to the treachery of those who, under the impulse of fear or the hopes of reward, had deserted or betrayed their associates ; for, as in the earlier days of rapine and spoliation, personal safety was secured by the most revolting acts of perfidy and injustice,\* so in the modern, treachery was not unfrequently the stipulated price of indemnity and life. And as the coward will protract a miserable existence at the expense of every tie, human or divine, many of the virtuous and the brave fell victims to the revival of that old and barbarous policy, which scattered the golden corn to the wind to purchase the chaff with a nation's blood.

Many were now the tenants of this gloomy mansion. Varied were their characters and relations in life ; the thoughtless, the witty, and the gay—the grave, the prudent, and the austere. But though varied the character and varied the taste, they were firm in misfortune and sincere in attachment. All bore their privations with the courage of men, and that calm composure which can only result from approving minds.

Solitary imprisonment was at first enjoined, and all intercourse rigidly prohibited ; and though on some occasions this mode of restraint could not be carried into effect, it was practised when circumstances permitted, and the caprice of those in power favoured its adoption. We had, however, hours of cheerfulness, and even of pleasure, for the ingenuity of the captive was an over-match for the vigilance of his keeper. With much labour and perseverance we succeeded in detaching the locks from our doors, and when our gaoler had retired to rest, and the inmates of the prison were supposed to be in profound repose, we opened our cells, and enjoyed that sweet intercourse of society which those only who have been deprived of it can appreciate. We replaced our locks before morning, with the same caution but with less labour than we had disengaged them in the night, and as our contrivance was not even suspected, it was a length of time before any discovery was made, and this was only

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\* The Irish of the seventeenth century, who were declared rebels in consequence of their resistance to the intolerable oppressions under which they laboured during the reign of Elizabeth, were only received to mercy on the express condition of betraying or assassinating some of their friends. Lord Mountjoy never extended mercy, as his secretary Morrison informs us, but to those who had first drawn the blood of their fellows.



effected by the sluggishness of some of our companions, who, having passed the night in cheerful society with each other, generally slept those hours in the day which were occasionally permitted for the indulgence of exercise and air. This circumstance often recurring, our vigilant keepers first began to wonder, then to suspect, and at length surprised us, when repeated success had rendered us less prudent, and confidence had lulled us into security.

Offences against the dignity of our governor were generally punished by a removal of the offender to a more loathsome quarter of the prison, and a privation of the few indulgences which we occasionally enjoyed. On this occasion it was impossible to remove all, and at the same time to gratify the angry feelings of our gaoler, for he had not sufficient room in the condemned cells to confine us apart; and to place us in society together, was no punishment for gay and lively Irishmen, no matter how dreary or secluded the situation. Besides, in society we might plot against the state, and, being of rebellious dispositions, encourage insubordination in the prison. It then became a question who should be removed, and in this dilemma our sapient governor had no chart to guide his selection in his comparative ideas of danger and guilt save the physiognomy of his prisoners. In this, however, he made the most egregious mistake, and selected for the dungeon some of the most mild and placid disposition, while he retained in their former situation others who possessed nerve and spirit for any enterprise. Such as were removed, experienced scenes of the most painful description. When exhausted nature had sunk in unquiet slumber, on a miserable pallet of straw in the moist and dreary cell, often has that slumber been broken by the plaintive voice of sorrow, in accents which still vibrate on my ear: "Awake, my countryman, awake, to-morrow I die;—in Christian charity join me in one short prayer." To form a knowledge of the prison-house, it is necessary to have seen and felt its horrors. Can it be supposed that those in high authority could have stooped to means so base? I admit their vigilance, I acknowledge the prompt severity of their measures, but I would hope that in some instances their emissaries outstepped the limits of authority, and that all the foul deeds perpetrated within and without the walls had not the approval or the sanction of their name; and yet

we have seen the most brutal and vicious sheltered under public acts of indemnity, whilst the laws of humanity and justice were outraged.

The government was cruel, its satellites were sanguinary, and their guilty minds created perpetual alarms. They had sinned beyond the power of human forgiveness, and to silence the cries of conscience they violated the bonds of nature. The vengeance of Heaven has overtaken many in their iniquitous career. I have known it exemplified in humble and more elevated life. I have relieved at my door the houseless and shivering family of the wretch who had excluded from my dungeon the wholesome air and food. I have seen the village tyrant, who, in the plenitude of magisterial authority, had dared to violate every law human and divine, and insult the justice of Heaven by perverted judgment and oppression of the weak; I have seen him humbled in misery to the dust, a living example of divine displeasure, hateful to himself and loathsome to others; at one moment vainly endeavouring by the profusion of his alms to deprecate the wrath of Heaven; soliciting at another the prayers of the virtuous, and in the next, sunk to the depth of despair;—rich in possession, a beggar in heart—cruel and unrelenting, a coward in soul;—the despoiler of female virtue, though the wedded partner of female worth. The sanguinary hand was withered by the orphan's curse, and the widow's malediction pursues his children, houseless and forlorn. This is one among the many examples of human depravity I could trace. It is not the colouring of fancy, it is a character from real life; it is known and acknowledged, and will be recognized by thousands.\*

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\* Amongst the many acts of cruelty perpetrated by this monster was one which even the most sanguinary laws can neither attempt to palliate nor justify. After the defeat of the brave but unfortunate Perry, on his memorable retreat to the Boyne, two amiable and respectable females, young, virtuous, and interesting, whose heroic and conjugal attachment had led them to accompany their husbands through all the perils of the field, were taken in the pursuit. The manly foe would delight in protecting virtue, and beauty has a claim almost irresistible even in the savage breast. But this blasted despoiler, to whom the government of the country had entrusted the commission of the peace and the command of a yeomanry corps, bore the unhappy captives,—not to the home of safety,—not to the asylum of honour,—but within the precincts of his own residence, which the virtue of an amiable wife should have rendered sacred. Brutal violence was offered, and every ruffian of his



Solitary imprisonment on a general scale was now totally impracticable ; but as alarm or caprice operated on the minds of those in power, we generally experienced the effects of both. Many were the stratagems and artifices resorted to for the purpose of receiving communications from friends without, or of relieving their solicitude from painful apprehensions for the safety of those within. The use of pen, ink, and paper, which is only allowed under certain restrictions to prisoners of state, was again prohibited with more than ordinary precaution. This of all others is perhaps the most painful privation that can be inflicted on a rational mind. Secluded from society, debarred all intercourse with men, and occasionally prohibited even the indulgence of books, or confined to such as an ignorant or despotic censorship might approve, the mind was left to its own resources, which even in the most cultivated will require nourishment and support ; else time becomes tedious, life insipid, and the mental organs deranged, which are toned by action and harmonized by use. I have seen as noble and as brave a soul, and as pure as any amongst his fellows, lost to society, to his country, and himself, from this, if I may so term it, refined but barbarous system of mental restraint, which left a brilliant lamp to waste and exhaust its fire from want of refreshing oil to feed and support the flame.

Despotic man, wrapt up in all his "little brief authority," still is poor and impotent, and the hand that would crush is often more injured than the heart that resists the pressure. Whilst the dark soul of despotism was employed in devising new modes of privations and restraint, the fair spirit of liberty was awake, and the sympathy of virtue, which tyrants

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band invited to the hellish example. To the honour of a British officer, who commanded in the neighbouring garrison, the wretched victims were rescued the following morning. The foul deed was stigmatized by his most marked and manly reprobation, and means afforded the unfortunates for conveying them to their far distant homes, to seek the wretched partners of their affections, or to mourn their misfortunes on their graves. I was in the neighbourhood where and when this horrid transaction took place, and I had the particulars of the disgusting outrage from a member of the corps, whose humanity shuddered, but whose feelings of virtue were ridiculed, when he spurned the base proposal of the foul and damnable despoiler. And yet (shame on the degenerate souls of men !) this monster was permitted to associate with society, until he became a stalking spectre of divine vengeance in the marked malediction of Heaven.

never feel—which fetters cannot bind, nor bolts restrain,—communicated confidence, entertainment, and hope. To a circumstance apparently simple in its nature, and unconnected with any measure which could tend to excite suspicion or alarm, we were indebted for the free communication with our friends, and the mutual interchange of sentiments of the last importance to both. This was effected through the ingenuity of a lady remarkable for the benevolent and generous feelings of her heart—(but why suppress her name? it were injustice to the virtues of the living and the memory of the dead)—she was the daughter of one of our most wealthy and independent citizens,\* whose wealth and independence were the least enviable of his endowments; she was the wife of the patriotic Bond, whose fate his country to this hour deplores, and whose station in the ranks of his countrymen remains yet to be filled. Should this page meet her eye, she will pardon the liberty which the writer has taken with a name associated with all that is amiable, and hallowed by the recollection of her virtues and misfortunes.

On that great festival which is respected in every quarter of the Christian world, this excellent lady, having addressed a polite message to the first authority of the prison, requested through him to furnish a dish for the table of the prisoners of state, who had long been excluded from their families and homes, and, in this season of festivity, deprived of the enjoyment of which even the humblest peasant partakes. This dish was accompanied by one of smaller dimensions, but of similar appearance, which was presented to the good lady, the governor's spouse. Never did the governor or his gentle rib partake of a dish more agreeable to their palates. It was a pasty of exquisite flavour, and seasoned by no parsimonious hand. Dainties of this kind were novel to the captive, but still more novel the design: choice indeed were the materials of which our dish was composed, and most acceptable to those for whose entertainment it was prepared. With the full permission of the governor, the pie was placed on our table, the turnkey received his Christmas-box, smiled as he turned the money in his hand, and retired. Under cover of the encrustment, which was artfully, but with apparent simplicity, arranged,

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\* The late Henry Jackson.



the dish was filled with writing materials, foreign and domestic newspapers, communications from friends, and

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It is impossible to describe, and difficult to conceive the sensations to which this discovery gave birth, or the happy results of this most ingenious device.

“O woman!—

When pain and anguish wring the brow,  
A ministering angel thou.”

From the hour of our imprisonment to this moment we had been utter strangers to every foreign and domestic occurrence, save the very guarded communications we received through the office of the secretary of state. But we now felt as if a new soul breathed within us; we were assured of the attachment of our friends, the sympathy of our country, and the strength of our cause; we learnt the weakness of our oppressors; we felt that our strength increased in proportion,—for the talent and virtue of the land were ranked on the side of union. The most distinguished for worth, for influence, and fortune were now the asserters of their country's rights! Union was strength, and strength was security, and virtue was the bond of national hope.

The good fortune which opened to us the long desired intercourse with our friends, was now heightened by the unexpected communication from the secretary of state, that such of the prisoners as were married had the permission of government to see their wives.\* I was much surprised, however, to find that my friend Nelson was not disposed to avail himself of this permission. Nelson had a tender affection for his wife, and she merited all the respect and attachment he could feel; yet he positively prohibited her visiting his prison. “I cannot,” said he, “suffer you to undertake a long and fatiguing journey at this season of the year to visit me in my cell. Here your nerves will be shocked by the brutality of a turnkey, and at the Castle your pride will be wounded by the insolence of a minion in office.” His prohibition, however, did not avail. He addressed his letter through the usual channel, the office of the secretary of

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\* I have reason to suppose that this indulgence was acceded to the humane interference of the late Lord O'Neill.

state ; but the faithful partner of his affections had already procured an order of admission to the prison.

As government had now so far relaxed in the severity of our prison discipline, my father addressed the secretary, his *friend* Lord Castlereagh, and requested permission to visit me after so long and painful a separation : but his lordship had not the heart of an O'Neill, nor the feelings of a father ; he refused, in the polite language of the courtier, without altogether closing the door against hope. My father was importunate ; several letters passed between him and the noble secretary, when the latter, to put an end to the correspondence, terminated his last epistle in these words :— “ It is necessary that you should state some specific grounds for the permission sought.” My father replied, “ I can state no specific grounds for the permission sought, save that God and nature require parental attention to my child, which, considered in a ministerial point of view, may not be deemed sufficient.”

For a considerable time no material change took place in our situation ; as our prison became too crowded, it was occasionally relieved by the removal of its surplus numbers to the prison ships and military provosts. Many were sent to pine and perish in the distant colonies of Britain, several to work the mines or augment the armies of her Prussian ally ; and (fatal infatuation !) others were compelled to enter the British fleet, which in a short time after, under the direction of the unfortunate Parker, taught an awful lesson to ministers, which threatened the extinction of their naval power.\* The ill success attendant on those measures, the increasing power of France, the agitated and defenceless state of Ireland, a great proportion of whose military force was now become more a subject of alarm than security, caused men of reflection to pause for a moment ; and in the interval of returning reason some efforts were made to reconcile the conflicting passions of the public, and by a cessation of hostility on the part of the government, to procure, if not an acquiescence, a non-resistance on the part of the people.

The person who offered his services on this occasion as arbitrator between the government and the people, seemed well qualified for the undertaking : he had once been a dis-

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\* Mutiny at the Nore.

tinguished character in Ireland. Of ancient family and ample fortune, he had been lately raised to the peerage, which reflected no additional lustre on the man whose ancestors swayed princely authority in the land before Britain had a title in that land to bestow—a leader of the immortal band of volunteers, the principles of liberty were early congenial to his heart\*—benevolent and kind, he felt for the misfortunes which he could not relieve, and in the eventful day of strife fell the victim of mistake, when the roused and ungovernable passions of men were no longer under the control of discriminating reason. To Lord O'Neill, then, was assigned the important commission, which, it was vainly hoped, would afford security to the state and tranquillity to the people.

Lord O'Neill entered on his mission in the full confidence and security of an unsuspecting mind. He had several interviews with us in prison, and though we entertained no very high ideas of the sincerity of the administration, we had no reason to suspect the purity of *his* views. But his humane intentions were counteracted by the intrigues of faction; for that demon of dissension, the bane of Ireland's happiness and peace, he who, in the language of Grattan, "lived too short for justice, but too long for his country," interposed.† The cherished hopes of conciliation and justice were followed by torture on the one hand, and resistance on the other.

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## CHAPTER V.

*Prison Anecdotes—Increased Severities—Communications from Prison—  
Just reliance on popular feeling—Perilous situation of the Governor  
—Domiciliary visit—Lord Carhampton.*

THE calm resignation and unshaken fortitude which supported men through the severest trials, and accompanied them in the last stage of their mortal career, seemed a matter of unaccountable surprise to those who were insensible to the love

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\* See in Appendix, No. I., Lord O'Neill's sentiments on parliamentary reform.

† Lord Cl—e.



of country and the innate feelings of virtue, which teach us how to die.

The fatal bell had tolled, and another victim was doomed to the grave. I endeavoured to conceal from myself the emotion which a recurrence of such scenes had not yet taught me entirely to suppress. He is, perhaps, said I, the only prop of a widowed mother ; the husband, father, long sighed for, never to return, or the youthful scion of a noble house. The irresistible impulse of feeling led me forward to exchange, through our grated window, the last cheering smile of confidence, and bid a final adieu. This simple but mournful ceremony was uniformly practised when not particularly prohibited by the ever cautious vigilance of the prison authorities. The procession was ascending the small interior platform, which was immediately opposite my apartment, and which afforded me a near and distinct view of the prisoner. I was rejoiced, however, to find that my fears were groundless, for he was not a victim to political vengeance ! I was about to retire, when something peculiarly interesting in his deportment arrested my attention. He was a man whose appearance evidently bespoke him above the ordinary class of society. Young, well-proportioned, and though emaciated by the rigours of imprisonment, his countenance had not lost those traces of manly beauty, which seemed to have been impaired less by corporal than mental suffering. His eye involuntarily caught mine, and as if struck by some sudden and impassioned impulse, he exclaimed, " And must I die disgraced when the road to virtue and to fame lay open before me ? Good God ! that I should have compromised the dignity of man to perish like a felon, when I might have fallen like a hero. It was my first—my only crime. I have endeavoured to atone—I have no wish for life—disgrace would be my companion, and I only seek forgetfulness in the grave." He extended his hand, unconscious of the bars between us, but suddenly recoiled. " Mine," said he, " is not the hand of honour. Yours shall not be polluted by the touch. While your tomb will be moistened by the tears of your country, mine will be marked by the finger of scorn." The unhappy man was hurried to to his fate.

By one of those acts of petty despotism, in which the governor of our prison but too often indulged, we had for



some time been restricted from the usual enjoyments, if enjoyments they might be termed, which government had permitted him to extend to the state prisoners under his *paternal* care. This restriction extended to the privation of exercise and air, and even the most remote or partial communication with our friends. We had offended against the majesty of the governor, for we had presumed to converse in a language which he did not understand, and for this offence were all communication and social intercourse interdicted. Our conversation being, as he supposed, of a treasonable nature, the safety of the prison and the safety of the state were equally in danger. Had this occurred in an earlier stage of our imprisonment, we should have treated the matter in a more trivial light, terror and seclusion being then the order of the day ; but having tasted a little of the *liberty* of a prison, we were too democratic in principle to surrender our rights at discretion.

The state of Europe at this period was big with events, and Ireland was not an uninterested spectator. The seclusion and restrictive severity within became a subject of alarm to our friends without ; and to relieve their minds from all apprehension of personal safety, we addressed a package of letters under cover to the patriotic and venerable James Dickson, one of the most deservedly popular men in the city. But having no hand through which we could procure a direct conveyance from the prison, we trusted to fortune (confident in the sympathy of our countrymen) for a favourable issue. By the ingenuity of a fellow-prisoner, who was confined in one of the loftier cells, the package was conveyed from the lower apartments to his, and thence impelled with considerable force beyond the external walls. Fortune favoured the design ; the feelings of the people were alive to our situation ; the package was picked up, and by a faithful hand conveyed to its destination.

This was an occurrence of some days old, and had tended, in a considerable degree, to calm the excitement which the late mysterious discipline of the prison had roused in the public mind. Still, however, the impression had not subsided, and the popular feeling was, that the state prisoners were treated with cruelty, and that their persons were in danger. Business in the course of the day having led the unfortunate governor to the city, he was speedily recognised,

and the fearful cry immediately raised, "De Launay and the Bastile."\* Astounded with terror the unfortunate man sought safety in flight. No house would receive, no hand would dare to protect him. Pursued by an immense crowd of the populace, which every moment increased in violence and numbers, he narrowly escaped with his life. Breathless, exhausted, and fainting with terror, he reached the prison, when, throwing himself on us for protection, he implored our intercession with the people for the preservation of his family and the security of his person.

Our main guard had been composed of soldiers of the Irish militia, who did not seem to feel all that sympathy for the governor which he thought his perilous situation demanded; or perhaps the generous feelings of Irishmen were rather imprudently evinced for the objects of Ireland's regard. It was therefore considered advisable to form the guard in future from a veteran corps then under the more especial observation of a military chief, not more distinguished for moral virtue than his ancestor had been for national fidelity. The Irish troops were removed, and, as we termed them, the veteran "Swiss Battalion" appointed in their stead. This augured no good to the prisoners. Fresh restrictions were imposed, and the nocturnal domiciliary visit afforded a gratifying source of entertainment to the refined taste of the *humane and virtuous Carhampton*.

In one of those excursions in which none but the gloomy and tyrannic soul could take delight, our several apartments were entered in succession by the commander-in-chief, accompanied by two officers of his staff, a brutal turnkey, and four soldiers with fixed bayonets. Aroused at the dead of the night by this most unlooked for and unwelcome intrusion; the fell visage of the turnkey with a dark lantern in his hand; the presence of soldiers under arms, and the horrid grimace of a countenance the most repelling I ever beheld—all conspired to fill my soul with terror—and the act of assassination presented itself to my mind as already commenced. I sprung from my pallet, and under the influence of horror bordering on despair, determined not to

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\* De Launay, who was governor of the Bastile at the commencement of the French Revolution, was put to death by the populace, at the storming of that fortress.



surrender my life without a struggle, and, unconscious of whom I assailed, my hand had already grasped at the throat of the noble commander-in-chief. What a specimen of the puerile employment of the man to whose courage and guidance was committed the protection of the state, and that state hourly threatened by invasion from abroad and tottering from dissensions at home! Whether a feeling of compassion or a sense of shame operated on the mind of this distinguished commander was not the subject of my inquiry—my person was uninjured and my terrors allayed. “Pray, sir, how long have you been confined?” “Since September, ’96.” “A long imprisonment.” “A painful one,” was my reply. “You are Mr. ——?” “And you, I presume, are my Lord Carhampton.” “Ha! You know me then;—good night, sir.” “Good night, my lord,” and I resumed my pallet.

The apartment in the corridor adjoining to mine was occupied by my friend Nelson, and to this his lordship directed his next visit. The unbarring of the heavy doors, and the hollow sound produced by the tread of feet, had alarmed many of the prisoners, and Nelson was up and dressed when the guardian of Ireland’s safety entered his apartment. “You are late up,” said his lordship, in a hasty and irritated tone of voice. “Rather early, I think, my lord,” said Nelson, “for it is not yet sunrise.” “Pray, sir, do you know me?” “Oh, perfectly,” replied Nelson. “Allow me, sir, to ask you where or when you have known me, for I cannot recollect that I have ever had the honour of your acquaintance.” “I had the honour to be reviewed by your lordship in the first battalion of Irish volunteers, when the light cavalry on the plains of Broughshane——” “Stop, sir, stop; those days are gone by—these are not fit subjects for prison reflections; go to bed, sir, and dream of something else than Irish volunteers.” The commander looked stern—Nelson frowned—the soldiers exchanged significant glances—and his lordship proceeded to the next apartment.

In this were lodged two characters of inestimable worth, the Rev. Sinclair Kelburne, and the celebrated physician, Doctor Crawford—good and benevolent men, but of a warmth of disposition which a vexatious imprisonment had rather increased than diminished. They were unacquainted with the person of the gallant commander-in-chief, but per-

fectly familiar with the notoriety of his exploits. "What, gentlemen, up so early?" "*Up*," replied his reverence; "*up*, captain, is the order of the day." \* "Then, sir, I recommend you to be down," said his lordship with a stern countenance and pointing to a chair. "I cannot think of sitting down, sir, while you are standing; allow me, captain, to hand you a chair." "No!" exclaimed his lordship, with the utmost scorn and apparent contempt, "No, sir, I shall never sit in company with traitors." "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," whispered the worthy divine; but roused by the word traitor, and unable to restrain the honest indignation of his soul, "Traitor!" he exclaimed, and bending his dark brow on the pallid countenance of the commander-in-chief, he pronounced in a solemn and emphatic tone, "*No! on the sincerity of an Irishman and the faith of a Christian, there is not a Lutterell within our walls.*"

There are times when the most profligate and abandoned to vice, though covered with the mantle of authority and shielded by power, will shrink in the presence of virtue, and flee from that conscious superiority which they have neither the strength nor the courage to resist. It was even so with the noble chief. The humble divine struck the chord which vibrated to his heart, and conscience flashed conviction on his mind, while the chastening hand was unconscious of the wound it had given. In hastening to retire, his lordship's attention was arrested by a small volume which he perceived in the worthy doctor's hand. "What has been the subject of your study, sir?" "Locke on Government," was the reply. "A bad book for a prison," rejoined his lordship. "Then carry it to head-quarters, sir," said the doctor, presenting the book with a sarcastic smile.

Prudence should have suggested by this time to his lordship the propriety of returning, for so far he had encountered nothing in the prison flattering to his vanity or agreeable to his taste; he was fretted and chagrined, and his temper, naturally splenetic, was not improved by recent occurrences. But something was still wanting to gratify that low and vitiated feeling, which is the inseparable companion of the mean and vulgar mind. The circumstance soon presented itself.

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\* *Up* was a popular expression well understood, and synonymous with the word *united*.



At the extremity of the corridor was one of those apartments designated a common hall. Here a number of young men were confined, who had only arrived in prison the preceding day, and waited the convenience of the gaoler to be distributed as circumstances or his caprice might direct. Many and curious were the interrogatives of the noble commander, and not less curious and pertinent the replies. There was something which struck the mind of the sagacious chief as peculiarly treasonable in the appearance and deportment of these young men; they were of robust and nervous frame, bold in aspect, with all that gay and lively sensibility so peculiar to their country; they were, in fact, Irishmen. The perils of their situation seemed to have produced no alarm in their minds, and though disposed to courtesy, they were neither daunted nor awed by the presence of the illustrious commander and the companions of his midnight rounds. "Why are so many of these people at large?" observed his lordship, addressing the gaoler, and eyeing the prisoners with a peculiar glance of distrust. "*At large!*" re-echoed the gay and lively Gordon; "and if this be enlargement, what the devil are your ideas of restriction?" "Silence," cried the petulant commander, "or you shall learn manners in the dungeon." "That's a logical argument," said Gordon, though in a less audible tone of voice; "I deny the premises."

The good-humoured merriment of Gordon caused a general smile amongst his companions, which was returned by a dark and menacing frown on the part of the chief. It is possible, however, that the scene might have terminated here, had not his lordship observed a small knot of green riband attached to a light foraging cap, which at once associated in his mind the treacherous field of Aughrim with the modern days of Irish union.\* Ungovernable in his anger, he demanded, in a stern and menacing tone, to whom it belonged, and who had dared to intrude this emblem of sedition within the sanctuary of the walls. "It is mine," said Gordon, advancing with a bold and manly front; and placing the cap on one of the finest formed heads in nature, with a look of conscious superiority and manly pride, he reiterated, "*It is mine.*"

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\* The defeat of the Irish army at Aughrim in 1691 has been always attributed to the treachery of Colonel Lutterell, the ancestor of this distinguished commander.

Passion had nearly suspended the organs of speech, but the motion of the hand and the action of the eye were perfectly intelligible; and the commander's wishes were already anticipated by the prompt authority of the gaoler.

Fetters and the dungeon presented no terrors to the manly breast, while a virtuous sympathy bespoke the generous feeling which animated every soul, and all eagerly demanded to participate in the perilous distinction of their intrepid associate.\* "Let them be indulged," exclaimed the humane commander of His Majesty's forces. His lordship viewed the operation of ironing the prisoners with a cold and malignant composure, while they, with cheerful heart and animated voice, sung aloud a popular air of the day, and again and again rejoined in the chorus—

"Though we to the dungeon go,  
Where patriots dwelt before,  
Yet in the cell, or on the sod,  
We're Paddies evermore."

To the notes of which the clank of the chains, in their slow and solemn march through the long-vaulted windings of the prison, afforded a plaintive, but not inharmonious accompaniment.

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## CHAPTER VI.

*Interesting Occurrence—French Fleet in Bantry Bay—Alarm of Prison Authorities—Devoted Fidelity of an Irish Peasant—State Informers.*

It was at the still hour of night, in the depth of the wintry storm, when the old year had nearly run its course, and the approach of the new was anticipated with alternate hopes and fears, when every moment increased suspense, and every footstep caught the listening ear, that the long vaulted passages announced the approach of feet, which proclaimed the arrival of the most unlooked for but most welcome of friends.

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\* Gordon was the son of a respectable Protestant clergyman in the province of Ulster. He bore with firmness a long and painful imprisonment, and after the disasters of 1798 found an asylum in the United States.

The moment was to us one of the deepest interest. The country was agitated ; the government was alarmed ; all the disposable military force was in motion, for a hostile squadron hovered on the peaceful shores of the south, and the capacious bay of Bantry was crowded with foreign masts. Never had Ireland experienced an hour of greater excitement—never was her population more agitated with alternate hopes and fears. The prisons were crowded with the most popular characters of the day ; and, as the troops were passing that in which we were confined, some detachments halted, and cheered us on their march to the south. The anxiety of the people increased as alarm for our safety or hopes of our liberation prevailed. The sanguinary measures of the administration had alienated the great majority of the nation, and the minority possessed neither the influence nor the power to contend with the approaching storm. Everything without the Cabinet bespoke the alarm that prevailed within, for government had neither the wisdom to conciliate the people, nor the talent to direct the disposable force, with which they were ill prepared to encounter a bold and adventurous foe. Hurry, confusion, and disorder marked the advance of the army ; all was terror, doubt, and dismay ; troops disaffected, horses wanting, the munitions of war badly supplied, and even the bullet was unfitted to the calibre of the cannon,\* which a defective commissariat had supplied. The general's culinary apparatus only was complete ; and, while the troops had to contend with the severity of the winter's storm, the mountain's torrent, roads broken up by the floods or rendered impassable from the depth of the drifted snow, peril and dismay in the front, hunger and privation in the rear, everything that could gratify the palate, even to the satiety of taste, was profusely provided for the general's table.† And, thus prepared, the unwieldy Dalrymple faced to the south, to meet the invincible Hoche, the victor of La Vendée, followed by the bravest troops the republic of France could boast. But the elements protected the empire for Britain, and the country

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\* Nine-pound shot was provided for six-pound cannon.

† So peculiarly delicate was the general's palate, that gentlemen who served under him in the yeomanry ranks, were sometimes obliged to ride express ten or fifteen miles to procure Cayenne pepper for his soup, and capers for his favourite sauce.



was preserved from the havoc of war. Hoche was separated from his troops by the winter's storm ; and the army having no instructions to land in his absence, the expedition returned to the ports of France.

This was a most interesting period for Ireland—a single breeze might have rendered it the most eventful. The solicitude of the country watched for the safety of the prisoners, who, being considered as national hostages, were in a two-fold degree the objects of concern, both to the government and the people, but with feelings the most opposite in nature.

The people, sensitively alive to the situation of those confined, had concerted measures for the liberation of a selected few, and the necessary means were provided for conveying us to a post of safety. The presence of friends, endeared to us by the double bond of country and personal esteem—the solemn hour of their visit—the apparent mystery which hung around it, the excitation of the moment, and the importance of the subject when disclosed ; how they arrived ; by what means they found entrance,—all afforded matter for deep conjecture. Whether the confidence of the prison authorities was secured, their hopes encouraged, or their fears allayed, is not the object of present inquiry. No suspicion was breathed, no alarm evinced. The rank of the visitors formed a guarantee of security, for their names were associated with the most influential in the land. The object of their visit was fully attained ; those to whom it was necessary to communicate were apprised of all that was interesting to learn ; and the actors in this important scene returned uninjured, uninterrupted, and unsuspected to this hour. They had executed a commission, which, at that particular moment, none but themselves were competent to perform ; and as it was attended with a risk, in which discovery must have involved both life and fortune, the generous act has left a grateful impression on the hearts of those who yet survive, which no change of country or clime can ever efface.

While the French fleet remained on the coast, the alarm on one hand was more than counterbalanced by the hopes entertained on the other ; and the following simple occurrence is in some measure illustrative of the general panic that pervaded every department in any degree connected with the government.

For some days an intense frost had prevailed, and the snow had fallen in deep and heavy drifts, but the atmosphere had become more mild, and an imperceptible thaw had already commenced. The snow with which the lofty parapets of the prison had been surcharged, and nearly bending under the weight, now came tumbling in heavy masses, with tremendous crash, on the smooth and deep-flagged passages below, and re-echoing from the vaulted walls in the interior of the prison, resembled the noise of a distant but approaching cannonade. It was near the hour of midnight—all were aroused—the alarm excited was almost beyond the bounds of belief. The prison authorities were palsied with terror. The sentries paced their solitary rounds, in vain looking for relief, and expecting momentary destruction; the prisoners alone were unmoved, for the imagined cannon of the foe menaced no ill to the captive in the cell. At this period of unprecedented alarm, no idea of resistance was entertained for a moment to the emancipation of all within. We were addressed by the prison authorities, with every expression of confidence and kindness. They were unmeasured in their professions of respect—they deplored the privations we had encountered—they shifted the blame from themselves to a higher quarter, and implored the protection of the prisoners of state. A little time, however, disclosed the cause of alarm; terror subsided—confidence was resumed, and the sentry again proclaimed “All’s well.”

Among the many interesting occurrences which took place during the period of our tedious imprisonment, the following anecdote deserves to be recorded; it develops the genuine feeling of the Irish heart, and displays the native sensibility of an unlettered, but generous mind. As our arrests had caused a lively sensation amongst our countrymen, many expressed the greatest desire to visit our prison. Frequent attempts were made to gain admission, but disappointment often followed, after fruitless expenditure on the part of our friends. The innocent and persevering Cotney effected more in his rude and simple manner than the wealthy or more courteous could accomplish; in fact, he found entrance, for his lively humour and homely appearance occasioned neither suspicion nor alarm. “In the name of God,” cried I, shaking the honest rustic by the hand as he entered my cell, “how did you procure admission, and what brought you



here?" "I came in by the big door," said Cotney, "where the red rascals are swaggering about yonder for want of something to do." "And what would you have them to do, Cotney?" said I. "To leave that, and be d——d to them," was the reply. I smiled at the simplicity of my friend, whose significant remark conveyed more than his words at first seemed to import. "But, my honest fellow, though you passed the red rascals without, how did you escape the watchful Cerberus within?" "I escaped nothing at all," said Cotney; "but if he was the devil's *brush*, I bothered him."

Though my long seclusion from the world had in some degree rendered me a stranger to the rustic humour of his native mountains, I enjoyed this naive observation with the most heartfelt delight. I was unable to repress the tear which started in my eye, while home, country, and friends all flashed upon my heart. "But, Cotney—seriously, my friend, what brought you here—a long journey, slender means, and in times like these much peril to encounter?" "Long enough," said poor Cotney with a sigh; "for I thought every step a mile till I reached your honour's house; but for means, if it is money you mean, I thank God here's means enough for us both;" and with an arch countenance, and a significant smile, taking a small leathern purse from his pocket, he poured out its contents. "But the risk of the journey," said I, "and little entertainment, my poor fellow, on the way?" "O sweet bad luck to the man that would look for entertainment *now*," cried Cotney. "Is it when you are all in gaol? But——" with an animated countenance which at the same time expressed confidence and delight, "but the hills will ring yet, avourneen, for you shan't be long here;" and doffing the trusty frieze which enveloped his manly form, he implored me to put it on, and in the exchange of our dress to effect my escape. "And what," said I, my eye firmly bent on the expressive countenance of my devoted friend—"And what, my faithful fellow, would be your fate, were it possible I could accede to your wishes, or succeed in the attempt?" "I would die in your place," he exclaimed—"it was that brought me here;" and with a composure of countenance, which bespoke the firm determination of his mind—"They may hang me if they please, but *you* will be safe—and the Lord will have mercy on *my* soul."



There is no situation in life where the true character of a man is sooner developed than within the walls of a prison. Here the narrow-minded and timid betray their selfishness and fears—the generous and brave display their energies of soul; and here the religious and the hypocrite are divested of the covering which the humility of the one or the artifice of the other had assumed. It is here that man appears in his native colouring, undisguised by art, and uninfluenced by the applause or the censure of the world. Though vice in a great degree predominates, a prison is not always the nursery of crime. Many, it is true, have sunk into habits of immorality, but some have been reclaimed from error and vice. Of this latter class was the unfortunate Kerr. Personal terror, operating on the weakness of an uncultivated mind, had induced him to lodge criminal informations of a political nature against four individuals, respectable members of society, whose fate rested on the testimony he had given, and whose death would have involved their families in the most irremediable distress.

The spy and informer have always found encouragement in the bloody annals of Ireland's distress; but in the present period, there was a systematic arrangement of villainy and fraud, which gave importance to the situation of those detestable monsters; and by identifying them in some degree with the government of the day, raised them to a rank and importance in the political scale, in proportion to the sanguinary duties, which none but the most infamous and abandoned could be found to perform. Hence the life of the most respectable individual was not a moment secure, when personal resentment or political intrigue had marked him the victim of suspicion or revenge. These hired monsters and traffickers in human blood lived under the countenance and protection of power, and assumed an authority and importance which was but too often and too fatally felt. Depraved by nature, and familiarised to the most appalling scenes of distress, they sinned with impunity against every law, human and divine, and were regarded with that horror by their fellow-men, which, were it possible to form the idea, the virtuous soul might be supposed to feel should it come in contact with the damned. Those reckless ruffians who rioted on the unhallowed hire of perjury and blood, fabricated plots, feigned conspiracies, and

in the hour of Ireland's distress perpetrated more misery than was even inflicted by the sword. Families were made desolate and whole districts laid waste, while the informer and the executioner walked hand in hand; and from the infamous testimony of the most depraved and abandoned of men virtue and innocence found no appeal. Oh! if ever horror appalled the human heart, it was on the exhibition of a scene the most revolting to human nature. The informer had singled out his victim, and the executioner had performed his office; the head had been severed from the lifeless trunk. But another object was to undergo the disgusting operation; it was the body of a comely youth, which the afflicted mother, after its suspension, had received into her arms. She had borne his death with the fortitude which Christian resignation imparts, but fell senseless at the mutilation of her darling child; while the unfeeling executioner, with the most hardened composure, in extricating the body from the mother's lifeless grasp, placed the knife, reeking with the blood of his former victim, in a horizontal position across his mouth, and grinned the most hellish smile of self-approbation at the adroitness with which he performed his brutal office.

Some of those favoured informers fell the victims to popular revenge; some, the abandoned outcasts of society, sought refuge in self-destruction; and others, when no longer serviceable to their vile employers, sunk under the hand of outraged justice, deserted by those who had encouraged and protected them in their course of blood.

In the class of informers, the case of the unhappy Kerr was innocence when compared with the infamy of others. Personal fear had operated on a timid mind, which circumstance was eagerly caught hold of by the petty despot of the village near which the unhappy man resided; and in the moment of terror he was led, by the hopes of self-preservation, to the implication of others. The four men against whom Kerr lodged his information experienced a rigorous confinement in their county prison; and as the period for their trial approached, great anxiety was entertained for their safety. The informer was confined in a remote quarter of *our* prison; and the better to conceal his dangerous design, he was represented by the authorities as a prisoner of state deeply involved in political crime, and guarded, if possible,



with more than ordinary precaution. But the secret was soon discovered which the wary governor was so anxious to conceal. An interview was procured with the unfortunate Kerr; by whom or by what means it is unnecessary to state.

The principal actor in this scene was young, and of an ardent and lively disposition; he was influenced by two powerful motives, love of country and humanity to the distressed. He disguised his person and aspect, gave an artificial colouring to his hair, habited himself in a half-worn suit of black, substituting for the lively collar of green the grave-folded clerical lawn, and with the accompaniment of a breviary and a snuff-box, he was tolerably well-equipped as a young and zealous divine. A golden key opened the padlock to Kerr's cell. The moment proved favourable—the mind of the unfortunate man, lowered by the painful restrictions of his confinement, and perhaps touched with remorse, was in a condition to receive the impression of pious admonition and advice—neither was spared. Happily the feelings of virtue were not yet extinct in his soul. The horrors of his situation were depicted in the most lively colouring, and the misery which a prosecution would inevitably entail both on himself and on the families of the unhappy victims, whose thread of life was spun by his hand, while his heart perhaps recoiled from the work of death. The nerves of Kerr were touched—his glimmering lamp, nearly exhausted, indistinctly exhibited his pallid countenance and emaciated form, which were in perfect character with his gloomy and miserable abode. He addressed his friendly visitor, whose habit and appearance so well bespoke the consoling minister of religion; he thanked him for his charitable advice—he pressed his hand—he implored his pious prayers, and earnestly besought him to return and impart to him the *consolations of religion*. “I would fain,” said his youthful and charitable instructor, who, admonished by this *serious* appeal, now began to reflect that he was not in reality the character which he had assumed—“I would fain return and impart every consolation in my power to afford, but the risk is great, and were it known that I had visited this cell without a written permission from the secretary of state my sacred calling would not protect me from the severest punishment.” “May Heaven protect you,” said the unfortunate Kerr; “you have brought peace and



consolation to my dungeon. For seven months I have not seen the face of man, save the surly turnkey who brings me my daily food, such as it is, neither plenty nor good in its kind; and yet the secretary informed me I should be treated as a 'prisoner of state.' Oh God, *such state* has nearly broke my heart—were I once free!—but——” “Hold, my friend,” exclaimed his pious monitor; “Christian charity teaches Christian forgiveness. Had your unfortunate countrymen poured out *seven months' malediction* against you for the misery they have experienced, the wrongs they have sustained, the privations they have borne, and the domestic afflictions their wives and children have been doomed to suffer, it is neither in a habitable prison nor in the mansion of animated clay that your soul would now reside, but, in the language of incontrovertible truth, in the *blaze of perdition*. But the mercies of Providence are above all his works, and the door of forgiveness is never closed against the repentant sinner.” These words were pronounced with a solemnity of speech and gravity of deportment which struck the heart of the unhappy Kerr; and again he implored the pious intercession of his charitable guide, and the forgiveness of those whom his weakness or his wickedness had wronged.

“It has been a fortunate work,” exclaimed —— on regaining his companions,—“we have rescued four men from death, and Kerr from perdition.” The intelligence was conveyed to the friends and advocates of the unfortunate gentlemen, which was tantamount to a reprieve from the arm of death. The hour of trial approached, Kerr was conveyed to the castle, where he received his instructions from the advisers of the state; the worn-out garments of the prison were replaced by new and more becoming attire; he proceeded on his journey to the county of D——, escorted by dragoons with all the pomp of a judge of assize, for in those days the government informers were always protected by a military guard. He appeared in court. The prisoners were arraigned,—acquitted,—and returned in triumph to their homes, for *honest* Kerr was no longer a government informer. Of the four gentlemen who were the subjects of this anecdote, two I believe are yet living. I know not what political opinions they may *now* hold, but they are men of truth, and will recognize the occurrence should this page ever meet their eyes.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Funeral processions—Opposed by the civil authorities—Murmurs of the people—Warm display of public feeling—Harvest—Fresh proscriptions—Wanton conflagrations—Church Militant—Vindictive outrage.*

The delight we had experienced in the preservation of four virtuous lives was followed by the most poignant distress for the victim of an early grave—youth, innocence, and beauty were consigned to the tomb; and the hand that records her virtues, even at this distant period, stops to wipe off the tear that flows from the recollection of her sensibility and worth.

The circumstances attending the death of this amiable girl are of too interesting a nature to be omitted. Her brother, Mr. Henry Haslett, a respectable merchant of Belfast, was one of the companions of our prison. He had an only child, whom he loved with an affection bordering on weakness; this child was the sole amusement of his solitary hours, and, too young to afford any subject for suspicion, had daily access to the prison. But the father's fleeting happiness was soon blighted; his son caught a contagious disease, whilst his sister, in watchful solicitude on the child, inhaled the fatal malady which consigned one of the fairest daughters of Ireland to an untimely grave.

Never shall I forget the impression which this mournful event caused in the circle of our little commonwealth. The lovely subject of our distress had been endeared to us all, not less by the sweetness of her disposition than the fascinating powers of a cultivated mind. Her brother's happiness was the object of her most anxious concern, but the benevolent feelings of her heart extended to every soul in distress.

It was impossible to exclude her visits from the prison, for, from the surly turnkey to the cold and impenetrable man of office, her voice acted as a talisman on the most obdurate heart. Her presence dispelled every gloom, as the cheering messenger of Heaven. But the meteor which dazzled the eye and enraptured the heart was only for a moment exhibited to the world, to raise the affections from terrestrial scenes and elevate them to a purer sphere—soft as the summer

breeze, and mild as the early breath of spring, her gentle spirit left the clay-clad form, which was borne by the hand of affection to the far distant tomb. The daughters of Erin strewed garlands in the way—thousands of youthful patriots surrounded the bier—and in the mournful procession of an hundred miles, every town and hamlet paid homage to the virtues of the dead. I have in vain endeavoured to procure a copy of the eloquent oration which the venerable Dixon pronounced at her tomb.\*

The proud but sincere tribute of respect which was paid to the virtues of this interesting female, seemed to have formed a precedent for the sepulchral honours which were now generally extended to all those who died at this period, entitled to the confidence and attachment of their countrymen. The enthusiasm of the people on these occasions was unbounded. The immense concourse which thronged the funeral processions became a subject of alarm to the government, and the civil power interposed its authority to repress this display of national feeling. But their interference was received with bitter remonstrance, and sometimes resistance, on the part of the people. "You have incarcerated," said they, "our friends and our brothers in dungeons; you deny them the right of trial, and to screen your iniquity you have suspended the laws of the land: if guilty, bring them to the bar of justice; if innocent, restore them to their homes. Are their wives to live in a perpetual state of widowhood? and are the children to be deprived of support, while the fathers pine in prison, the victims of an arbitrary enactment,† more cruel and unjust than the prompt sentence of death from your sanguinary tribunals? Will you carry your resentment even beyond the grave? and shall the rights of sepulture be denied because a just tribute is paid to the virtues of the dead?"

Never, perhaps, was the popular mind more roused than at this moment, nor more generous feelings evinced by a brave and kindhearted people. Where the families of the prisoners were large and the means not abundant for their support, their children were taken by their more opulent neighbours, and treated with the most kind and paternal

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\* The Rev. William Steel Dixon, Presbyterian minister at Portaferry, in the province of Ulster.

† Suspension of the "Habeas Corpus."



affection. When the proprietor of a farm was removed, the neighbouring populace assembled, tilled his ground, made up his harvest, planted or dug out his potatoes, as the season of the year was suited to the work; and from the immense numbers who pressed forward on these occasions to testify their respect for the individual or attachment to the popular cause, the labour of the season has frequently been accomplished in the course of a few hours.\* A rustic dance usually closed the labours of the day, when the peasantry retired peacefully to their respective homes, the multitude breaking up into small bands, each taking its destined route, singing as they marched their favourite national airs, and combining discipline and regularity in all their movements.

Providence had been peculiarly bountiful this season, and blessed the land with abundance. The farmer had a plentiful return; his granary was well stored; his crops had been got up in good order, and no man anticipated poverty or want. But in this moment of confidence and security, his hopes were blasted by the severest scourge which the tyranny of man could inflict on the human race.

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\* The following are extracts from the principal journals of Ulster, 1796:—

October 14.—“We have hitherto abstained from mentioning the curious circumstance that has repeatedly happened of late, of multitudes of people assembling to cut down the harvest of different persons. As faithful historians of public proceedings, we give the following general view of these masters as far as we have received information of them:

“Eldred Pottinger, Esq. of Mount Pottinger, had twelve acres of oats cut down in thirteen minutes and a half. A poor man in the same neighbourhood had two acres cut by the same reapers, during the time he was lighting his pipe. Mr. William Orr, near Antrim (*at present in Carrickfergus gaol*), had his entire harvest cut down by near six hundred of his neighbours in a few hours. Mr. Rowley Osborne of this town (*now in Newgate*) had forty ricks of hay stacked in a short time by an immense number of his neighbours, without the formality of a horse or cart. Mr. William Weir of Dunmurry (*now in prison*) had 2,360 stooks of grain and thirty-eight ricks of hay carried in and completely stacked and thatched in three hours. Mr. Fitzgerald of Sandy-bay (*at present in Carrickfergus gaol*) had his crop cut down in a similar manner. Mrs. Clark of Swatragh (*whose son is in prison*) had her harvest cut down in two hours: in the evening of the same day, they returned and carried all the hay in the meadow to the stack-yard and stacked it.”—BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.

October 20.—“About 1500 people assembled, and in *seven minutes* dug a field of potatoes belonging to Mr. Samuel Nelson of this town (*now in Kilmainham gaol*).”—NORTHERN STAR.

The gaols were now crowded with prisoners. Many private houses were turned into military provosts, floating prisons have been established, and the loathsome tenders stationed round the coasts received the surplus of the victims which the land prisons were inadequate to contain.\* A considerable portion of the army was dispersed in small cantonments, through the most populous and fertile districts, and under pretext of searching for the disaffected they scoured the country, committing the most wasteful depredations. The people naturally fled at their approach; absence was construed into guilt, and, disappointed of their victim, the army laid waste, with an indiscriminate hand, house, furniture, corn, cattle; and sometimes innocent and unoffending inmates have perished in the flames which enveloped the property in ruin. Merciful God! what must have been the nature of that man whose heart could devise, or whose hand could subscribe to deeds so foul and detestable. Let it not be said that these acts of inhumanity and outrages on the laws of God and nature were committed without the approval or sanction of authority; it is notorious that men, holding His Majesty's commission of the peace, and some clothed in the sacred mantle of religion, were not unfrequently the most forward and unfeeling in those scenes of desolation and blood. I knew a reverend divine in the vicinity of the capital, who, having burnt the property of a respectable farmer in his neighbourhood, and a parishioner of his own, returned back to the scene of conflagration, and *with his own hand committed to the flames two sacks of corn and meal* which the unhappy mother, with the assistance of her female domestics, had secreted, to feed, in the hour of calamity, her houseless and unprotected children; and yet the perpetrator of this disgraceful outrage was promoted to high honours and emolument in the church—a just reward for his humanity and moral virtues. The bad effects from uniting the magisterial with the sacerdotal character, have, independent of the present, been conspicuous on too many

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\* One of the leading public prints of the day, commenting on this subject, observes, "New lists of proscription are made out, new warrants for high treason issued, and numbers daily added to the black and inhuman catalogue; and names are talked of, of such distinguished integrity and honour, that it looks as if the felons alone were to remain outside of the gaols."



occasions, and particularly where party dissensions prevailed, or litigated cases of tithe have come before this lay-ecclesiastical tribunal.

It was my fortune, more than once, to witness the zeal with which the church militant performed its civil and military functions. On one occasion, the pious rector, W——, escorted a party of military to the house of a friend, who had sheltered me from the licensed assassins that were laying waste the neighbourhood, and committing the most unprovoked and wanton excesses; my person was known to this meek minister of peace, and he came in the garb of a friend, the better to betray. I eluded, however, his search, for being apprised by an honest peasant of the situation in which he had posted his party, I escaped the snare; but unfortunately for my kind and hospitable host, in retaliation he was made prisoner, escorted to the next military provost, stripped of his clothes, and in the presence of his distracted wife, tied up to the bloody triangles!

Having been imperceptibly led into a long digression, I return to that period of my narrative painfully interesting, and combining but too much of domestic with national misfortune. As yet the system of free quarters had not commenced; great and shameful acts of atrocity had been perpetrated, but, so far, the army had not been *generally let loose* on the people; there was still some little effort to uphold a show of legislative authority, and in the execution of those acts which deprived the citizen of life, and his children of bread, several of the more humane amongst the British officers refused to bear a part, without the co-operation of the civil magistrate, whose presence alone was deemed sufficient guarantee for the violation of every law of humanity and justice. Some were not influenced by feelings of so delicate a nature; and others, even outstepping, if possible, the bounds of ministerial depravity, seemed only to experience delight in proportion to the misery they inflicted on their fellow-men. Amongst this class of monsters was the corps of Ancient Britons; humanity shudders in reviewing their acts, while the pen of the historian would be polluted in recording the disgusting scenes.

When the life of a virtuous individual had escaped the sword of the assassin, or his unassailable conduct and character formed a shield against the informer's malice, his property



was doomed a prey to lawless outrage, and an hour has transferred him from independence to ruin. Many were the occurrences of this nature ; one will be sufficient to illustrate the temper of the times, and the injustice of the government that sanctioned the perpetration of acts which no law of expedience or necessity could justify.

My father, whose open and manly character afforded so little room for calumny or misrepresentation, that even the hired informer stopped in his career of infamy, and more than once refused the proffered price for his impeachment, was now the marked victim of ministerial vengeance. In the blush of open day, within the immediate vicinity of two garrisoned towns, an active magistracy, and an armed police, his property was assailed, the most *deliberate* devastation committed, and his entire establishment, in the course of a few hours, was left a desolate ruin. My mother, with my sisters, was received with much kindness and hospitality by her brother, a gentleman of considerable fortune, on the borders of Meath, a man of warm heart, gentle disposition, and courteous manners ; and, though imbued with the sentiments of that portion of the Catholic aristocracy who were opposed to the system of union, he was not deficient in personal courage, nor insensible to the feelings of fraternal regard, and his house afforded an asylum to his female relations, whilst the male branches of the family were almost universally proscribed.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Prison Scene—Petition to the Throne for Dismissal of Ministers.*

It was about this period that my father received permission, for the first time, to visit me in my prison. Our meeting was not without deep interest to both. I was conversing with two of my fellow-prisoners, Nelson and M'Cracken, on the subject of the late occurrence, when my father entered my cell. We looked for a moment on each other without uttering a word. His fine form and features appeared to have undergone some change since we parted, and perhaps the unwholesome restraint of a prison had not improved

my external appearance. "Thank God!" he exclaimed, folding me in his arms, "the tyranny of man cannot fetter the mind, nor sever the tie that unites the kindred soul." Turning to my companions, he saluted them with a feeling which was heightened by the peculiar situation in which we were relatively placed: then addressing my friend Nelson and pointing to me, while his countenance bespoke a mingled feeling of pleasure and pain, "The atmosphere of a prison, I perceive, is not favourable to the bloom of youthful plants." "We will bloom yet," said Nelson, "on the mountain's brow, where the wild heath blossoms without *parliamentary permission*." Nelson's observation caused a general smile, for since the late arbitrary enactments and base servility of the Irish legislature, the term *parliamentary permission* was proverbially used to express the general contempt in which the nation held the scandalous venality of the Irish parliament.

As my father's visit was limited to an hour, that hour glided too rapidly for the indulgence of our conversation—he was soon given to understand that it was time to retire. "One word, my dear child," said he, "before we part. I know the sensibility of your heart, and that the only matter which can disquiet your mind, is the consideration of what your mother and I may experience in consequence of your arrest, and the hostile feelings of the administration towards my family; but let not this disturb you, we shall meet that hostility with firmness. And though our hearts are inseparably linked with your happiness and safety, *we are prepared for the worst that tyranny and injustice can inflict*." Then pressing his hand on my head, and endeavouring to conceal the emotions of his heart, he pronounced in a tone of voice which I shall never forget, "God bless you." Nelson and M'Cracken were scarcely less moved than myself; we were silent—we were sorrowful; but recovering our firmness, and ashamed of the momentary weakness we had betrayed, we grasped each other by the hand, and in the bond of union vowed *eternal hostility to the enemies of our country*.

The ills which my father had so lately sustained were only the precursors of greater misfortunes. He had committed an offence which the government could never pardon. He had dared to call the attention of the monarch to the afflicted state of Ireland, and to implore His Majesty to dis-



miss his wicked and unprincipled ministers from his presence and his councils for ever. The following document, which I have copied from the records of the day, will remain an imperishable monument of the injustice of the government and the miseries of the people.

“The Humble PETITION of the FREEHOLDERS of the county of ANTRIM, convened by public notice from the high Sheriff, at BALLYMENA, on Monday, May the 8th, 1797.  
—The Honourable Chichester Skeffington, High Sheriff, in the chair; Luke Teeling, Esquire, Secretary.

“TO THE KING’S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

“SIRE,—We, the Freeholders of the county of Antrim, in the kingdom of Ireland, feel it our indispensable duty to your Majesty, to ourselves, and to our country, at this awful crisis, to approach the throne with a representation of our most intolerable and most unmerited sufferings; and we do conjure your Majesty by that great covenant which binds the sovereign and the subject in the reciprocal duty of allegiance and protection, and in the awful presence of God, not to suffer those advisers against whom we prefer our just complaints, to add to the catalogue of their offences that of shutting your eyes or your ears to the dangers of your empire or the miseries of your people.

“They have involved us in a war, of which the motives and the conduct have marked their injustice and incapacity, and of which the disastrous event seems reserved by Providence as a dreadful example of unprovoked and frustrated oppression. Innocuous only to the enemy, its fury and havoc have recoiled only on ourselves, in the waste of blood, in the profusion of treasure, in the destruction of private industry and happiness, in the depravation of public integrity, in the loss of character, in the decay of liberty, and finally, in the ruin of commercial credit.

“Such are the fatal consequences which the empire has to charge upon the advisers of this most calamitous war; but they form only part of the crimes and the sufferings which have deformed and degraded your kingdom of Ireland.

“Your Majesty’s ministers have laboured in this country, and with the most fatal success, to destroy the third estate of the legislature, and reduce the government to an arbitrary



despotism, by bribing the representatives of the people to betray their constituents in parliament; and this crime, if capable of aggravation, they have aggravated by the most public avowal of the fact.

“They have laboured with the most remorseless perseverance to revive those senseless and barbarous religious antipathies, so fatal to morals and to peace, and so abhorrent to the mild and merciful spirit of the gospel.

“They have answered our demands for a full and fair participation of our rights and privileges of the British constitution, and our just complaints of their rapacity, corruption, and oppression, by the most atrocious calumnies against our characters, and the most merciless prosecutions against our lives; and in order more effectually to organise the system of vengeance and servitude, they have endeavoured through the medium of *spies* and *informers*, ‘those baneful instruments of despotism,’ to destroy public confidence, and poison the intercourse of private life. They have employed the forms of that legislation of which they have destroyed the substance in the enactment of penal laws, by which they have successively abrogated the right of *arms* for self-protection, the right of being free from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and that sacred right of *trial* by a *jury* of our *country*: rights, for the protection of which, ‘*the united will of a people resolved to be free*,’ called your Majesty’s illustrious family to the throne.

“One enormity only remained unattempted by your Majesty’s ministers, and upon that too they have at last presumed to adventure; ‘to set up a prerogative avowedly against the law,’ and to let loose upon your subjects all the horrors of licentious power and military force, by sending bands of mercenaries in every direction, unattended in general by civil or even military officers, to plunder the houses (once the sanctuaries of your faithful people) of those arms which were necessary for their protection and their defence, which form such an essential feature of discrimination between the freeman and the slave, and which, when assistance could not be obtained from your Majesty’s ministers, they *voluntarily* wielded in defence of your person and government.

“Such are the measures by which the submission that the prerogative owes to the law has been blasphemously dis-

claimed ; by which the constitution has given place to the bayonet, and the people have been put out of the protection of the peace ; by which numbers of our fellow-subjects have been banished without even the forms of a trial, or are crowded into dungeons, and this only because they have dared to unite together in the vindication of common right, in the just and legal resistance of common oppression, in the kind and brotherly consolation of common suffering.

“ Such, Sire, are the grievances of a people who know that their title to liberty is from God and nature, which no human law can abrogate, nor authority take away.

“ Had your Majesty’s people of Ireland, ‘ without regard to religious distinction,’ been fully and fairly represented in the Commons House of Parliament, the evils of which we complain could never have existed. We do therefore implore your Majesty, as you value the happiness of your people, to aid them in the speedy attainment of that inestimable blessing.

“ We do hereby prefer to the justice of our King, this our complaint against those wicked and unprincipled ministers, who, to the inseparable calamities of war, have with the most wanton cruelty, superadded the horrors of intestine tyranny and proscription, alike regardless of the rights of Ireland and of the union and safety of the empire. *And we pray your Majesty to dismiss them from your presence and councils for ever.*”

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## CHAPTER IX.

*Crowded prisons—Ministerial economy—Enlargement of some of the prisoners of state—Ultra loyalty—Consequences—General Lawless.*

How to support the immense multitudes who now crowded the gaols, the tenders, and military provosts, became a matter of serious consideration to the more economical members of the administration, and arrests were for a period less frequent. The prisons in consequence by degrees were sensibly thinned by the hand of power, or the hand of death. A few were liberated on the application of friends who were fortunate enough to possess influence with some

of the leading members of administration. We were deprived of the society of a dear and much-beloved friend, the humane and enlightened Crawford. We regretted his loss on account of the acquisition we had derived from his mental and professional acquirements; but we rejoiced in his liberation, which restored to society one of its most valued members, and to our country one of its purest patriots. The cause of his liberation was as honourable to his professional talents as gratifying to his friends. His course of practice being extensive, embracing all the respectability of the wealthy and populous province of Ulster, his absence was a subject of serious alarm, and to the real was added the imaginary disease. A general memorial was addressed to the vice-regal throne, praying that the worthy doctor might be restored to liberty, and his political sins forgiven him—sins, if he had any, which sprung from a generous breast; for never was there a truer heart, or one more devoted to Ireland in the day of her distress. He bade us farewell, while his soul seemed to linger with us; but in quitting the friends he loved, he returned to a home endeared by the fondest domestic remembrances.

Crawford was a man of no ordinary talent and mental endowments. He was the early advocate of union and reform; he was a distinguished member of the Irish Volunteers; and as he was amongst the first to take up arms in this great national cause, so was he one of the last who reluctantly laid them down. His influence and connections were extensive, and had government seriously apprehended danger to the state, few men could be found more formidable in his native province; and yet he was liberated without even the mockery of a trial, or the formalities of bail, whilst others, inferior to him in political influence, wasted the vigour of life in prison, vainly demanding trial, or offering the most ample security, even for a temporary enlargement, for the adjustment of their domestic concerns. But even-handed justice was not the policy of the state. The energies of the strongest minds were sometimes enfeebled; and it was only with an exhausted frame and a ruined fortune that the captive was at last restored to blessings which he could no longer enjoy. What was the reply of a member of the Irish administration, when pressed by the benevolent Earl of F——, to extend the rights of trial, or even the common



rights of humanity, to a venerable gentleman, after an unmerited incarceration of nearly four years? "A large portion of his property, I admit, has been a prey to outrage, and I also admit that the tender's hold and the dungeon's damp might have injured a stronger frame; but his fortune is not *yet* exhausted, and his influence is still formidable to the government." The unfeeling minister is no more, and the victim of his vengeance rests in his hallowed tomb; but the noble earl yet lives, an honour to his country, and the uncompromising advocate of her rights.

Personal jealousies and the vindictive feelings of weak minds had been too much associated with the mal-administration of the day, and the prejudice of party, polluting the channels of justice, had given an ascendancy to one portion of society, which roused the resentment and confirmed the hostility of the other. Men notorious for every moral and political depravity, were distinguished by the favour of government, and exercised the most wanton display of authority as ignorance or interest might suggest. The administration of the country perceived the evil, but had neither the firmness nor the justice to redress it. Hence men of moderate political temperament were victims to the suspicion or the resentment of those who admitted no medium between the ardour of the democrat and the submissive loyalty of the mere tool to power. That fiery zeal which acknowledged no moral or constitutional guide, has often driven men, distinguished through life by the purest constitutional principles, to acts of the most unmeasured resistance. The gallant Perry, whose extraordinary campaign evinced a military science which would not have dishonoured a more experienced veteran in arms, might have remained to this hour the tranquil proprietor of his paternal domain, had not those monopolists of exclusive loyalty dared to impeach of disaffection a heart that was the generous seat of every manly virtue. Perry was a Protestant gentleman of independent fortune, liberal education, and benevolent mind, and nurtured in the very principles which placed the family of the present monarch on the British throne; and yet, in those days of licensed outrage, he experienced every indignity which low and vulgar brutality was permitted with impunity to inflict. He was arrested on suspicion, personally abused, dragged like a felon to the common guard-house,

his hair was closely cropped, and his head rubbed with moistened gunpowder, to which a lighted match was applied, for the amusement of a military rabble !

Why was the gallant Lawless driven to the arms of France ? And why did Acton's generous proprietor forego the enviable honours of his rank, to cling with desperate fidelity to a desperate cause ? *They* were not men of turbulent spirit or disaffected mind. The flowery path of science was the walk of one, rural enjoyments the delight of the other, while a noble disinterestedness of soul was the acknowledged characteristic of both. The former was distinguished for the highest professional talents, remarkable for the suavity of his manners and the classical refinement of his taste. He displayed a military science and courage in the armies of France which won the admiration of the great Napoleon, elevated him to the highest honours of military rank, and bedewed his grave with the tears of his brave companions in arms.\*

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## CHAPTER X.

*Mr. Secretary Cooke—Momentary hopes of conciliation—frustrated—Irish exiles in Prussia—Foreign states—Injurious policy of Britain.*

WITH youth on my side, and a naturally good constitution, and possessing, in common with my countrymen, a tolerable flow of animal spirits, I was enabled to bear up against the rigours of a tedious imprisonment, and the domestic misfortunes in which my family had been involved. But disease had now visited the prison, and a severe attack of fever, against which I long struggled, proved an over-match for the

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\* On the British troops taking possession of Walcheren, Lawless evinced a boldness and intrepidity of courage which commanded the respect of the contending armies. He maintained his post with the most heroic bravery, and preserved the honour of the French arms in protecting the national flag, with which, wrapped around his body, he plunged into the waves, and swam to an open boat a considerable distance from the shore ; then proudly exhibiting the standard of France amidst a shower of bullets from the beach, he bore it off in triumph. This gallant officer was the near relative of my valued friend, my talented and distinguished countryman, John Lawless, Esq.



native vigour of my constitution : the resistance with which I had met its approaches served only to increase the disease. On the representation of my friends, supported by the testimony of my kind and benevolent physician \* (and here I would fain pay a tribute of respect to that venerated character, whose talents and whose virtues will only be appreciated when society shall be deprived of the enjoyment), in the second week of my illness, I was removed from the prison by an order from the Secretary of State, and conveyed to the house of a venerable lady, the widow of Captain Thomas M'Donnell, an officer of distinguished worth in the British service. Here I experienced the most kind and maternal attention ; nor did the warmest attachment to the crown, and the most conscientious adherence to the religion of the state, oppose any barrier to that generous hospitality which she fearlessly extended to the proscribed and oppressed.

Previous to my removal from prison, I was required by government to provide bonded security to the amount of four thousand pounds, that on the restoration of my health, my person should be again placed within the walls of the prison, or held at the disposal of the law officers of the crown.

To the professional ability of my kind medical friend, under the aid of divine Providence, I was indebted for a perfect though tedious recovery. My fever was succeeded by debility, under which I long laboured ; I took the earliest opportunity, however, of returning strength to wait on Mr. Cooke, then Assistant Secretary of State, to redeem the pledge which my friends had given, by surrendering myself to the government authorities. When I alighted from my carriage, I was surprised at the military display which the castle of Dublin presented—it bore more the appearance of a citadel besieged, than the peaceful residence of the civil authorities. Every man was dressed in military costume. The clerks of office frisked about like young cadets, who, though vain of their dress and appointments, were not yet familiarised with their use. Such of the law officers as I encountered had exchanged their sable for scarlet, and presented the most grotesque appearance—a perfect caricature of the military profession.

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\* Dr. Christopher Teeling, for many years an eminent physician in the city of Dublin.



Some of the Aldermanic body, who happened to be in attendance, were so completely metamorphosed, that even the inventive imagination of Shakespeare could have produced no forms more extraordinary, or more opposite in nature to the human race—a combination of German moustaches, with Prussian cues extending from the cumbrous helmet which covered the tonsured crown of years, the gross unwieldy paunch, supported by a belt cracking under the weight of turtle and savoury ragouts. The immense rotundity projecting beyond the scanty skirt of a light horseman's jacket, formed an appearance not more disgusting to the eye, than unsuited to the saddle which was to bear the precious burthen of the gallant volunteer. "And are these," said I, "the heroes that were to contend with Hoche! Oh, blessed be the hour that raised the storm which protected *corporate* rights, and deprived the vulture of its prey."

My appearance at the castle excited some little feeling of inquisitorial observation, for I was the only man there who was not habited in the military costume of the day. In passing through the crowd, I was amused by the simple remark of an honest Irish sentinel on guard, who, contrasting my meagre frame and pale blanched cheek with the bloated countenances of the civic heroes around me, "Look, Pat," said he, tapping his comrade on the shoulder, "he is thin to be sure; but I'll warrant, poor fellow, he has seen harder service than the best of them." I made my way through the circle to the ante-chamber of the secretary, which was crowded with needy expectants, bustling magistrates, and the numerous parasites that always flutter round the purlieus of office. I called the messenger in waiting, and without regarding the usual ceremonies of castle etiquette, I handed him my card and requested he would present it to the Assistant Secretary of State. In a few minutes my name was announced. My ready admission seemed a matter of surprise to those around me, for many had long waited in anxious expectation, full of self-consequence, and deep fraught in idea with communications of the highest importance to the state.

The secretary received me with the urbanity of manners which always distinguishes the gentleman, and the courtesy which bespeaks a liberal mind. Perhaps we had both been mistaken in the character of each other; common fame had

represented him as a man of cold, calculating disposition, coarse and repulsive manners ; and he, in all probability, had expected to encounter, in the person of a prisoner of state, the sanguinary regicide, the despoiler of altars and of thrones. He at once, however, perceived that whatever might have been my disposition heretofore, my person now exhibited but slender physical powers of hostility to the government. "You appear weak and fatigued, sir," said he ; "have the kindness to be seated." "I am come, Mr Secretary," said I, "to redeem the pledge which my friends have given, and to surrender myself to the disposal of government."

The secretary, who from the nature of his official situation must have been familiar with many cases of individual as well as public distress, had not perhaps heretofore encountered an interview with any of those who were the victims to tyranny and the suspension of law. He had now an opportunity of witnessing in my person the effects of both. He entered into conversation with me on the nature and extent of my imprisonment, and in our lengthened discourse he perhaps perceived, that the genuine principles of *liberty* were more deeply implanted in my bosom than the feelings of *hostility* or *revenge*. I spoke with an honest freedom, and in the warm glow of filial indignation against the unprovoked cruelties which my father and family had experienced. I arraigned the conduct of those who had perpetrated, and the passive injustice of those who had sanctioned, the foul proceedings. "I am disposed," said he, "to concede much to the impetuosity of youth, in consideration of feelings which it were now more prudent to suppress than indulge ; but the wisdom of the legislature cannot be questioned, and the power of government must be exercised when milder measures have failed."

I felt indebted for the humane consideration which Mr. Cooke had *personally* evinced for the restoration of my health, and, unwilling to trespass longer on the duties of his office, I begged of him to accept my surrender, and exonerate my friends from further responsibility on my account. The better feelings of nature on this occasion were not alienated by the cold and heartless duties of the man of office ; his countenance betrayed a sensibility of which he himself, perhaps, was not conscious, and, with an expression of unaffected kindness, he asked me, "was I not yet tired



of a prison?" "I accept," said he, "your surrender—your friends shall not be held further responsible; but it would be destructive to your health"—(and with a look which seemed to imply, "and painful to my own feelings")—"to remand you to prison. Your recovery depends much on exercise and the renovating air of the country; and at the approaching term of trial, should government be disposed to proceed on yours, leave me your address, and we shall apprise you." "I shall in the interim, then," I observed, "proceed to the north, where the air of my native mountains will tend to perfect the re-establishment of my health." "No, no," replied the secretary hastily, "not to the north—by no means to the north; remember you are still under the surveillance of government; we shall keep a watchful eye on you." "Permit me, at least, to visit my old fellow-prisoners, and favour me with an order of admission to *Kilmainham*?" "What, again to prison? Has your long residence there not been sufficient, that you are still desirous to return?" "I am desirous," I replied, "to visit the companions of my captivity; for our attachment is mutual and sincere, and, could I say it without offence, persecution——" "Hold," said the secretary; "you shall have an order for admission *for once only*: remember, it cannot extend beyond one visit."

There is a pleasure in recording acts of a benevolent nature; and while I, in common with my countrymen, detest, and shall ever detest the iniquitous measures which the government of Ireland pursued—while I shall denounce them to posterity and reprobate them with my latest breath—I should hold it uncandid to omit any opportunity of doing justice to the individual who could, even in one instance, so far depart from the foul system of oppression which marked the Camden administration as the most wantonly cruel that ever disgraced the annals of a country. Cooke was a man of incessant labour, neither popular in his manners, nor remarkable for a mild, conciliatory disposition (the latter were not the qualities suited to the administration of the day). As he was considered cold and unfeeling, he shared in the general odium which was so justly attached to the government of Lord Camden; but on the present occasion he evinced a feeling which bespoke a mind not unfitted for milder pursuits, and which, like a verdant spot in a parched and dreary waste, appears more grateful when con-



trasted with the surrounding desolation. He discharged the unpopular duties of his office, in the opinion of many, with an inflexible severity; but I am bound to acknowledge, that towards me he displayed a kindness of disposition which I had not anticipated. At a period subsequent to that of which I now treat, when resistance to the government had ceased, and the insidious policy of the crafty Cornwallis had applied the lever to remove the foundation-stone of Ireland's independence, and transfer her legislature to a foreign land, many who had escaped the fatal proscription of 1798 were still harassed and held in the most painful state of solicitude and alarm. Some who were worn down with fatigue, incessant watching, and nearly exhausted by famine, surrendered at discretion, while others preferred the security of the mountain top to the faith of the government. My father, who was at that time confined in the castle of Carrickfergus, received a proposal from government that, provided he and his entire family would emigrate, all further hostilities against them should be suspended. Fearing that anxiety for my safety might influence my father's mind, I addressed a message to Mr. Secretary Cooke, and proposed to surrender myself, provided he would *guarantee* me an *impartial* trial. This, perhaps, he had not the power to accomplish; his reply conveyed what might have been considered tantamount to it; at all events, it expressed a feeling of humanity. "If he is safe," said he, "let him remain where he is, and no extra means shall be resorted to for his apprehension."

Another short anecdote, and I close the scene. A distinguished and venerable prelate of the Irish church declared,\* that in a conversation with Mr. Cooke, in London, after his removal from office, the ex-secretary informed him, that prior to his quitting Ireland he conceived it a duty he owed to the tranquillity of the country, to destroy any documents in his hands which might prejudice the minds of his successors to the injury of individuals, whose feelings, though imprudently directed, it was now wiser to conciliate than to irritate.

This was a rational policy. Happy for Ireland had it been earlier acted on; but we have to deplore that men, whose

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\* Dr. Hussey, Roman Catholic Bishop of Waterford.

education, connexions, and station in life should have taught them to respect the milder feelings of humanity, gave loose to the most wanton and barbarous excesses, and in the exercise of cruelties unprecedented in any country but our own, debased the nature and attributes of man, while they rendered still more detestable the government of which they formed a part. Their cruelty is written in characters which no time can obliterate, and which, though the Divine precept instructs us to forgive, the feelings of human nature tell us we can never forget. Had they even dealt out to Ireland but a moiety of justice, the Irish heart would have acknowledged the boon; for there is not within the regions of the expanded earth, a being more sensitively alive to just and generous treatment; neither is there a foe more bold and determined when wrongs, real or imaginary, exist. Prodigal of life, he seeks redress; no enterprise is too daring; no peril too great. I have seen him mount the breach—I have seen him force the line. I have been the early companion of his sorrows and his sufferings, his associate in the dungeon, the sharer of his toils and privations on the mountain top, with the canopy of heaven for his covering, and the flinty stone for his pillow. I have viewed him when separated from all the heart holds dear, surrounded by ruin, when life seems no longer a blessing, and the weakness of nature questions whether it be a sin to despair. In this chaos of misery, touch but the strain of his country's wrongs, and his own are forgotten. He seeks the despoiler, though surrounded by an iron host; and if victory crown the struggle, he raises what his hand had laid prostrate, for his enmity ceases with the strife. Firm in misfortune, generous and kind to excess, unsuspecting as brave, he is too often the dupe of artifice and deceit, and the arm that has so often shivered the chains of others, seems destined by a fatal policy to rivet his own.

For a short period, about the close of the year 1797, it appeared as if the government of Ireland was either disposed to conciliatory measures or had in some degree abandoned the idea of rousing the people to actual resistance;—the coercive system, if not suspended, was certainly during this period less acted on. Had government been sincere, I have no hesitation in saying, that measures of conciliation would have been hailed with satisfaction by the



people, and embraced with no less sincerity ; but an object was to be obtained, and that object could never be accomplished while the physical strength of Ireland remained unbroken.

An amnesty, though not proclaimed, appeared in a great degree at present to exist. Many influential characters had been liberated from prison : no doubt their conduct was narrowly watched, but they walked abroad unmolested, and some individuals whose houses had been burned during the period of their imprisonment, confident of the good faith of government and returning tranquillity, had commenced the rebuilding of them.

What then was the object of the Irish government? Were they at length tired of the disgusting scenes which had taken place? Did they really feel compassion for the sufferings of a much injured country, or were they disposed, by restoring these men to society, who possessed influence with the people (and who certainly could not be less hostile to the government from a recollection of the wrongs they had sustained) to afford an opportunity for the exercise of that influence in rousing their countrymen to a physical contest? This mysterious proceeding was viewed by some with suspicion ; the less reflecting believed government sincere. The former stood upon the defensive ; the latter returned to their usual occupations of life. But short and delusive was the interval of repose ; fresh severities were soon resorted to by the government, and renewed exertions for resistance by the people.

The disposition of the Irish soldiery had caused the most serious alarm ; a few had fallen victims to their political feelings, but government seemed fearful of identifying the army with the people, by pushing these measures too far. The population was a growing subject of disquiet, and many were the plans devised then, as now, by modern saints and sapient legislators for arresting this *national evil*—all were abortive. The cold-blooded projects of a Forster, and the exterminating sword of a Camden, proved alike ineffectual. Ireland presented then, as she does at the present day, a phenomenon in nature—in poverty, though the most luxuriant soil on earth—in bondage, while every heart pants to be free. The blessings within her reach she seems destined not to enjoy, while domestic happiness



is battered for a precarious existence in a less favoured land.

The unwise policy for centuries pursued by England towards this unfortunate country, was never more conspicuous than about this period. Emigration was then the order of the day, but it was not voluntary emigration—it was exile, it was banishment—hence it was tyranny. Many, smarting under the lash of the Camden administration, would gladly have embraced an asylum in the United States; but an ungenerous policy on the part of the American government for a time interposed, and an alien act disgraced the legislature of that country which Irishmen had bled to emancipate. The days of her infant struggle had passed, but the imperishable fame of Montgomery could never be forgotten. Moylan, Carroll, and a thousand heroes may sleep in the silent tomb, but the remembrance of their virtues will be cherished while liberty is dear to the American heart. The adoption of this restrictive measure was regarded as proceeding more from the intrigues of the common enemy to freedom, than emanating from the genuine sentiments of the American mind.

We turn with pride to the enlightened Jefferson, while we record the memorable display of feeling on this occasion, which did honour alike to the head and the heart of that illustrious statesman:—"Shall we," said he, "whose forefathers received hospitality from the savage of the desert, deny it to our brethren in distress; shall there be no spot left on this habitable globe for *The suffering friends of benevolence?*" This powerful appeal roused the republican mind. The act was rescinded, and America acquired additional strength from European numbers and talent.

But though the British government at that period would exclude the unfortunate Irishman from an asylum in the United States, they had no objection that he should fraternise with despotic Prussia, and numbers of our countrymen, with the broad brand of *rebel* on their front, were sent to work the mines, or recruit the armies of this northern monarch, weakened by the mad combination of kings in their fruitless attempts against the liberties of republican France. Prussia, neither insensible to the acquisition of Irish talent nor the native intrepidity of the Irish people, gladly embraced the offer, and the lively sons of Hibernia were wafted to the

Baltic, to fight for a cause which their souls abhorred, or to terminate a wretched existence in the deleterious bowels of the earth. This inhuman traffic, however, was of short continuance, and the vile advisers of the measure had little cause to boast of its success. Many a gallant fellow, who ill could wear the *unfitting* livery of despotism, found his way to the victorious ranks of France, where promotion was the sure reward of his unconquerable zeal, when armed with vengeance in the cause of freedom. And thus terminated the weak and the wicked measure of that shallow politician, who, to drain the country of a useful population, strengthened the hands of a deadly foe. Strange infatuation, the desire of which still prevails: emigration or exile is to this hour the infallible nostrum for all the miseries of Ireland. Her internal resources would support treble her present population. Her soil, rich and luxuriant, like the genius of her people, supplies treasures to others without exhausting her own; while her sons, deprived of civil rights at home, are instrumental in establishing freedom in the most distant quarters of the globe. But it has been the policy of Britain from the first hour her footstep was imprinted on our shore, to render her name hateful to Ireland by the most flagrant acts of injustice; to irritate—to weaken—to divide; to insult every monument of national respect—to deride every feeling of national pride. The sneer of imagined superiority meets the native proprietor in every walk and station of life, and the most insidious means are employed to debase him in the world's estimation and his own. It is only in foreign states that his merits have obtained for him the proud distinction which intolerance denies him in the land of his birth. Where has Irish fidelity been wanting, or generous confidence been met by an ungrateful return? Neither in the ranks of Germanic empire, nor in the heroic legions of France. The distinguished honours conferred by the Empress Maria Theresa are proud testimonials of the chivalrous fidelity of our countrymen, while the field of Fontenoy proclaims to Britain the fatal effects of violated faith.\* But we

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\* "The field of Fontenoy was contested with the most obstinate courage by the allied troops of England, Hanover, etc., under the command of the Duke of Cumberland, and those of France under the veteran Marshal Saxe. The battle was long and doubtful, but the fortune of the day promised victory to the allies. The troops of France were



need not travel to foreign states for examples of Irish fidelity and valour. Britain cannot forget the lavish expenditure of Irish blood that has floated her to conquest, or buoyed her in distress. And must the heart for ever recoil with disgust on opening the black statutes which sully the glory of England's brightest page, and brand with suspicion a generous people, whose arm was her stay in the hour of peril, and whose breast was her shield till victory was won? Base ingratitude of a nation which conquers to enslave, and would bind in eternal bondage the arm that, nerved with freedom, would render her invincible to the combined assaults of the world.

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worsted in every quarter, and the attention of the commander was now chiefly directed to the personal safety of the monarch. In this hour of discomfiture and impending ruin, the French king addressed the veteran Saxe, and eagerly inquired, was there nothing left to uphold the honour of the day. 'I have yet,' replied the gallant Saxe, 'a small reserve. The Irish troops are fresh, but their numbers are few.' They were led to immediate action, and the stimulating cry of '*Cieniegeg er Louime-neigh augus er faule ne Sassinagh*,'—'Remember Limerick and British faith,'—was re-echoed from man to man. The fortune of the field was no longer doubtful, and victory the most decisive crowned the arms of France." "Curse on the laws," exclaimed the British monarch, "which deprive me of such subjects."

I have extracted the foregoing anecdote from a journal of the campaigns of my maternal grand-uncle, who bore a distinguished share in the honours of that day; and the following I report on the authority of his son, who served in the Irish Brigade until its final departure from France in the early years of the revolution.

"We were under arms and about to march from France, after a century of military service, covered with military glory. We halted to receive the last salutations of the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth, in the person of Monsieur his brother. The scene was an affecting one. He advanced to the front of the brigade. The officers formed a circle round him. He addressed us under evident feelings of agitation—many were honoured by the most flattering marks of his personal attention. 'We acknowledge, gentlemen,' said he, 'the invaluable services which France, during the lengthened period of a hundred years, has received from the Irish Brigade; services which we shall never forget, though totally unable to repay. Receive this standard' (it was embroidered with the shamrock and *fleur de lis*), 'a pledge of our remembrance, a token of our admiration and respect; and *this*, generous Hibernians, shall be the motto on your spotless colours—

'1692—1792.'

'Semper et ubique fidelis.'"



## CHAPTER XI.

*View of the United Irish System towards the close of the year 1797—Transportation without trial—Friendly communications from confidential departments of the state—Irritating measures of government—Torture—Motion of Lord Moira in the British House of Peers for an address to the Throne—rejected—In the Irish, to the Viceroy—rejected—Motion of Mr. Fox in the British House of Commons for an address to the Throne—rejected—Determination to goad Ireland—to resistance—Preparations on either side for a hostile struggle.*

PRIOR to 1798, the United Irish System seemed to have reached its acme; indeed, strictly speaking, about that period it might rather have been considered on the wane. This may be accounted for in two ways.

The passions of man are not stationary, and having reached the point of elevation, they either recede or burst every barrier opposed to their action. It was impossible that the public mind could have acquired a higher pitch of excitement than was generally experienced in the year 1797. Hence it naturally lowered, because an immediate appeal to arms was resisted by those who had not formed a just estimate of human nature in the fluctuating passions of the human mind. It is not the present subject of inquiry what were the motives which influenced the adoption of this measure; the result was a less ardent feeling in some quarters, which it was afterwards found more difficult to rally.

Another cause for the apparent supineness of some, and the partial defection of others, was the pacific system which government for a moment seemed disposed to adopt; in which, as I have already observed, had they been sincere, conciliation, no doubt, could have been effected with the people. This favourable disposition, however, was soon interrupted, and the angry passions on either side were rekindled with increased fury.

The unconstitutional proceeding of transporting men without trial had long been a favourite measure with the Irish administration, and the merciless hand of a Lutterell had already depopulated whole districts, tearing asunder the tenderest bonds of nature, severing husband from wife,

parent from child. "I was unable," said a gallant British officer with whom I lately conversed, "I was unable to bear the horror of the scene; I was on board a British ship of war, then lying in the bay of Dublin, and crowded with those unfortunate victims. The screams of the women and children, who daily hovered in small boats round our vessel, to catch a last look at the unhappy husband or parent, whom they were doomed never again to behold, roused such feelings of horror and compassion for the miseries of your unhappy country, that I quitted the ship, and only returned when she was actually under weigh."

This practice had been so generally acted on, that it ceased to be a subject of astonishment, and was merely regarded as a common grievance. Some men, however, of more influential connexions in society, having experienced this summary mode of *thinning the superabundant population*, inquiries were instituted by their friends, and bitter invective expressed the indignation they felt at the foul and despotic proceeding. The united Irish Societies provided funds for the support of the wives and children of those men who were severed from their country and the sweets of domestic life; powerful exertions were made to recover some from banishment, and to procure others the protection of more friendly states. Those exertions were not always unsuccessful, nor could they escape the observation of a vigilant government, and consequently its censure.

Another subject of disquiet to men in power was the difficulty they sometimes encountered in procuring convictions for political offences. The spy and informer were guarded with the most watchful attention. Their informations were considered secret as the inquisitorial tribunal, and yet these informations were often communicated to confidential individuals; which enabled the committee entrusted with the prisoner's defence to defeat the informer's treachery, and rescue the intended victim from the snare of death.

Such was the sympathy of the public, such the intensity of interest which the cause of union excited, that neither in the civil nor military departments did that cause want a confiding and communicating friend, when confidence or communication could present any prospect of safety or justice to the accused in his defence. The crown lawyers have often viewed with astonishment the powerful exertions of our in-



imitable Curran, when defending the life of his client, and it seemed to them a matter of the most unaccountable surprise how this popular advocate could anticipate the most important disclosures, and be able to rebut, on the moment, evidence which had been previously conclusive as to the conviction of the prisoner; but so it was—and all the influence and ingenuity of the government could not guard against it. In fact, the united Irishmen had friends in many departments of which Lord Camden or his advisers little dreamed. But the climax of Ireland's misfortune was rapidly approaching, and these friends were constrained, by motives of personal safety, to assume a carriage and countenance not in accordance with their feelings.

Whatever might have been the ostensible object of the government, it was now evident that Mercy had no seat in their councils. As if dissatisfied at the late interval of tranquillity (if a partial cessation of persecution merited the appellation), they seemed determined by a new and inventive system of cruelty to regain the ground they had lost, in the estimation of those who prized an Irish executive in proportion to its departure from every line of justice. The suppression of United Irish Societies was the pretext, but it was a feeble—it was a false one; it was notorious that in the districts where that system had made the least progress the greatest acts of outrage were perpetrated under the sanction of government; and in those quarters where the inhabitants were most remarkable for a peaceful demeanour, moral disposition, and obedience to the laws, every principle of justice and humanity was violated.

Wexford, which was the scene of the greatest military atrocity, and subsequently the boldest and most effectual in resistance, was at this period less identified with the organised system of union than any county in Ireland. Of this government was perfectly aware; and it was only when the outraged feelings of human nature were no longer able to bear the torture of the scourge, the blaze of the incendiary, and the base violation of female virtue, that Wexford rose as one man, and, like a giant in his strength, hurled defiance at the oppressor. Then, indeed, was Wexford *united*; not in the calm and progressive order of the system, but in the field and in arms—in the face of God and their country—in the presence of their wives and their children—



they swore *inviolable union*; and what the parent societies might not have effected in years, the injustice of government accomplished in an hour. Wexford is one of the minor class of counties in geographical extent, and yet in this county alone, thirty-two Roman Catholic chapels were burnt by the army and armed yeomanry within a period of less than three months, while the destruction of domestic property kept full pace in proportion with the sacrilegious conflagration. And this was the system which Lord Camden's administration adopted for the suppression of United Irish Societies, and the tranquillization of a country which was peaceful and submissive until blighted by its counsels.

Kildare, Wicklow, and other neighbouring counties, exhibited similar scenes of horror. The army, now distributed through the country in *free quarters*, gave loose to all the excesses of which a licentious soldiery are capable; "formidable," in the language of the gallant Abercromby, "to all but the enemy." From the humble cot to the stately mansion, no property—no person was secure. Numbers perished under the lash, many were strangled in the fruitless attempt of extorting confessions, and hundreds were shot at their peaceful avocations, in the very bosom of their families, for the wanton amusement of a brutal soldiery. The torture of the pitch cap was a subject of amusement both to officers and men, and the agonies of the unfortunate victim, writhing under the blaze of the combustible material, were increased by the yell of the soldiery and the pricking of their bayonets, until his sufferings were often terminated by death.

The torture practised in those days of Ireland's misery has not been equalled in the annals of the most barbarous nation, and the world has been astonished, at the close of the eighteenth century, with acts which the eye views with horror, and the heart sickens to record. Torture was resorted to not only on the most trivial but groundless occasion. It was inflicted without mercy on every age and every condition; the child, to betray the safety of the parent; the wife, the partner of her conjugal affections; and the friend and brother have expired under the lash, when the generous heart scorned to betray the defenceless brother or friend. The barbarous system of torture practised at Beresford's riding-house, Sandy's Provost, the old Custom House, and other depôts of human misery in the capital,

under the very eye of the executive, makes the blood recoil with horror, while we blush for the depravity of man under the execrable feelings of his perverted nature. In the centre of the city the heart-rending exhibition was presented of a human being, endowed with all the faculties of a rational soul, rushing from the infernal depôt of torture and death, his person besmeared with a burning preparation of turpentine and pitch, plunging in his distraction into the Liffey, and terminating at once his sufferings and his life.

“You are come too late,” exclaimed a young man to those unfeeling monsters; “I am now beyond your power. My information was feigned, but it afforded me a moment’s respite. I knew you would discover the artifice—I knew the fate that awaited me, but I have robbed you of your victim. Heaven is more merciful than you”—and he expired. This melancholy transaction occurred in the town of Drogheda in the spring of 1798. The unhappy victim was a young man of delicate frame; he had been sentenced to 500 lashes, and received a portion with firmness, but dreading lest bodily suffering might subdue the fortitude of his mind, he requested that the remainder should be suspended and his information taken. Being liberated from the whips he directed his executioners to a certain garden, where he informed them arms were concealed. In their absence he deliberately cut his throat. The arms not being discovered—for none were there—the disappointed and irritated party hastened back to inflict the remainder of the punishment. He only lived to pronounce the words which I have reported.

About the same period, and in the same populous town, the unfortunate Bergan was tortured to death. He was an honest upright citizen, and a man of unimpeachable moral conduct. He was seized on by those vampires, and in the most public street stripped of his clothes, placed in a horizontal position on a cart, and torn with the cut-o’-nine-tails long after the vital spark was extinct. The alleged pretence for the perpetration of this horrid outrage was that a small gold ring had been discovered on his finger, bearing a national device—the “shamrock”—of his unfortunate country.

It was now evident to the most sceptical mind that Ireland could not remain tranquil nor longer passive under the tortures with which she was goaded. Life, liberty, and pro-



perty were not worth the purchase of an hour. In the "domiciliary visit" and forcible entry of the peaceful mansion at the hour of domestic repose, every rule of decorum and feeling of delicacy was outraged; and the high-minded female, in humble or exalted life, was not permitted a moment's indulgence for attiring her person, to protect it from the obscene glance of the midnight ruffian. Many were the scenes of brutal and dastardly outrage to which this detestable measure gave rise; and the heart that had the courage to feel, or the arm that had nerve to resist, was sure to fall the victim to its bold and terrible temerity. I met the veteran Baron Hussey in this reign of terror. He had been reared in camps—he had fought with the sanguinary Cossack, and he had been the captive of the barbarous Turk—he had lived familiar with scenes of desolation and death; and he declared to me, on the faith of a Christian and the honour of a soldier, that he had never witnessed such horror before. "No man," said he, "dare impeach my loyalty or question my respect for the throne; but ere I consent to receive those ruffians within my walls, to destroy my property and pollute the sanctuary of my dwelling, I shall die on my threshold with arms in my hands, and my body shall oppose a barrier to their entrance.

The enlightened and benevolent Marquess of Hastings, then Earl Moira, anticipated the consequences which must result from the atrocities exercised by the army on the Irish people. He detailed those atrocities before the *British* House of Peers in language which did honour to his heart, and he pledged himself to the proof. He knew the character of his countrymen—the limits of their endurance and their powers of resistance, their patience under privations, but determined hostility if roused to seek redress. He owed a duty to his country, he loved the land of his birth, he respected the monarch, and desiring to unite the stability of the throne with the rights of the subject, he moved an address, imploring his Majesty to conciliate the affections of the Irish people. His motion was rejected.

In the month of February, 1798, when it was evident that the measures of the Camden administration must soon lead to consequences which humanity would deplore, Earl Moira made another effort to stay the evils which awaited his unhappy country and in his place in the *Irish* House of Lords,



proposed an address to the viceroy, recommending the adoption of *conciliatory* measures, as the extraordinary powers with which the parliament had invested him for "*tranquillizing Ireland*," had failed. But the combination against the independence of Ireland was too strongly formed, and the motion of the noble lord was not more successful in the Irish than in the British House of Peers.

Fox—the immortal Fox—the advocate of the oppressed, the friend of freedom, and the friend of the human race, he too, tried the pulse of power; he failed, for the miseries of Ireland were not a fit subject for intrusion on the royal ear. No inquiry was instituted into the state of Ireland, for the system of her government would not bear inquiry. Her growing strength and importance had become a subject of jealousy and alarm. Her population within the short period of forty years had doubled its numbers; education kept pace with this alarming increase; the union of her inhabitants gave strength to her physical force, and her local situation had attracted the attention of foreign powers. Her *dismemberment* was therefore determined on. Ill-fated country! torrents of blood must flow—the bravest of your sons must perish, to deck the funeral pile of national independence.

An executive in conjunction with some of the most malignant spirits of the day, whose desperate fortunes courted desperate enterprises, was an engine not unfitted for the work destined to deprive Ireland of her rank as a nation, and extinguish her last hope of independence. The leader of that faction, who had long rioted on the spoils of his country, bartered domestic peace for national dissension, smiled at the torture which his sanguinary hand had inflicted, and like a second Nero exulted in the flame which menaced his country with ruin—this monster, whose mental delight was the misery of man, and the harmony of whose soul was the shriek of despair, impatient of the delay of actual hostilities, unblushingly betrayed in the Irish senate the predetermined resolution of enforcing insurrection, and regretted the cautious councils that for a moment opposed any obstacle to the decision of the sword.

It was vain now for any man to affect feelings of loyalty or attachment to a government which had declared war against humanity and the rights of the people. Of what material must that man have been composed, who could

witness his property consumed, his home in the possession of a licentious soldiery, his wife or daughter a prey to their brutal outrage, and not arm himself with treble vengeance against the infernal despoiler? Death in any shape was preferable to the horrors he encountered, and he gloried in resistance, though he lived but an hour to revenge his wrongs. It was this which led him to outstep the original compact of the Union, and direct his views to ulterior objects and bolder designs.

That the united system was originally confined to the two points of *emancipation* and *reform* is evident from the characters of many who early embraced it. Had it been otherwise it is not rational to suppose that it would have numbered in its ranks so many wealthy landed proprietors, so much mercantile property, and even the fundholder himself. These men had no revolutionary principles, nor would they have risked their fortunes on the uncertain issue of a revolutionary contest. Whatever might have been the more extended views of *individuals*, the great body had originally formed no design beyond these two specific points. It was only when all hopes of constitutional redress had failed, when life and property were denied the protection of the law, that resistance became a duty and allegiance was withdrawn. Would to God that the healing hand of conciliation had been extended, and the fatal spark extinguished ere the flame had burst forth.

But government had attained the object desired. *Ireland was goaded to resistance*, and security was sought for in the tented field.

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## CHAPTER XII.

*Lord Edward Fitzgerald.*

THE rank, the talent, the virtues, and disinterested patriotism of Lord Edward Fitzgerald distinguished him, in the estimation of his countrymen, as a man every way qualified for the most important trust and the boldest undertakings. Young, ardent, and enterprising; enthusiastic in his love of liberty; of devoted attachment to his country, and possessing



the most unbounded confidence of his countrymen in return; reared in the school of arms, and distinguished for military science, he possessed all the qualities to constitute a great and popular leader, and seemed destined by nature for the bold and daring enterprise to which an abhorrence of oppression, and the most lively sense of justice irresistibly impelled him. Sacrificing in this pursuit all the prospects to which rank, fortune, and an illustrious line of ancestry opened the way, he sought only in the ranks of his country that distinction which his talents and virtues could not fail to obtain.

Though no chief had actually been appointed to the supreme command in Leinster, the eyes of all were naturally directed to Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The officers who composed his staff, as well as those who had been selected to command in the respective counties, were men distinguished either by military talent or local influence. Few, however, of the former now remained in Ireland. It was difficult to elude the vigilance of the government, and the period of resistance having been from time to time postponed, the officers of foreign states had returned to their respective services, to which the busy scenes of warfare throughout Europe had recalled them. Those who had offered their services in the hour of Ireland's distress, were, from these circumstances (some, alas! but for a short period), precluded any share in her disastrous fortunes, but Ireland can never forget their generous sympathy in her cause; the gallant Hon. — Plunkett, that intrepid soldier of fortune, whose fame will be recorded while Buda or the Danube are remembered; the brave and devoted Bellew, who would exchange the laurels of foreign conquest to encounter peril and privation in the land of his birth; the most distinguished for virtue in the noble house of M—re, to whom titles and fortune opposed but a slender barrier, where the happiness of his country and her liberties were at stake; the young and ardent L—s-n, whose virtues shed lustre on the titles of his son; and he to whose memory my heart is devoted with more than fraternal affection, whose soul was the seat of honour, whose mind was resplendent with every virtue, whose love of country burned with unextinguishable fire, and whose unbounded philanthropy embraced the whole human race. Shade of the brave! accept this tribute of



remembrance ; and may thy ashes, moistened by the tears of thy country, be mingled with mine, when the lamp of thy brother shall be extinguished, and that heart cease to vibrate, which loved thee for his country and his country in thee.

A more intimate acquaintance with Lord Edward's character served only to increase our respect, by exhibiting his virtues in still brighter colours : with the purest feelings of moral worth were associated the firmest characteristics of mind. In the hour of peril he was calm, collected, and brave ; in his more social moments cheerful : but, gentle and unassuming, he attracted all hearts, and won the confidence of others by the candour of his own. The early period of his life had been almost exclusively devoted to military pursuits ; and at the conclusion of the interesting struggle for the independence of the western world he became acquainted with the celebrated La Fayette, and other distinguished characters in the American revolution. An association with such men could not fail to make a lively impression on a young and enthusiastic mind ; and his subsequent residence in France, in the proudest days of her history, gave fresh energy, if energy were wanting, to a soul already devoted to the great cause of universal benevolence. Candid, generous, and sincere, his soul never breathed a selfish or unmanly feeling ; obstinate, perhaps, when wantonly opposed, but yielding and gentle by nature, he sometimes conceded to counsels inferior to his own ; high in military talent, he assumed no superiority, but inspired courage and confidence where he found either deficient. The only measure which, perhaps, he was ever known to combat with the most immovable firmness, in despite of every remonstrance and the kindest solicitude of his friends, was on the expected approach of an awful event, where failure was ruin, and success more than doubtful. "No ! gentlemen," said he, "the post is mine, and no man must dispute it with me ; it may be committed to abler hands, but it cannot be entrusted to a more determined heart. I know the heavy responsibility that awaits me ; but whether I perish or triumph, no consideration shall induce me to forego this duty." The eventful period passed by ; circumstances changed its expected course, and the measure was abandoned.

The powerful influence which Lord Edward possessed

the unbounded confidence of the people, and their personal attachment to the man whose family had so often shared in the misfortunes of their country, and were justly designated "*Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*;" the increased severity of government; the undisguised preparations on either side for a hostile struggle—all led to the more immediate adoption of measures which perhaps no human prudence or foresight could then avert. The most conspicuous for influence or leadership were either at this moment arrested, or large rewards offered for their apprehension. With a mind impatient of restraint, where he conceived duty or honour to lead the way, Lord Edward could ill brook concealment at this eventful moment, when his presence could have marshalled thousands in arms. Delay appeared pregnant with danger; some of the boldest spirits were daily cut off; the miseries of the country hourly increased; and it was resolved at every hazard to try the fortune of the field.

The country which boasts the honour of Lord Edward's birth was the first to raise the standard in the eventful struggle, and the plains of Kildare, which for centuries had been the abode of tranquillity and peace, presented, ere the morrow's sun had set, ten thousand men in arms. Had Lord Edward Fitzgerald in person succeeded in erecting the standard in Leinster, it is uncertain what might have been the result of this measure, or its influence on the future destinies of Ireland. But vain are the hopes of man, for the power that marks his destiny no human force can arrest.

The protection of Lord Edward's person was an object of the most anxious solicitude, and the heroic fidelity of those to whom it was entrusted recalls to our remembrance the romantic and chivalrous attachment which distinguished the natives of a sister country when the fugitive descendant of her former monarchs possessed no portion of the princely domain of his ancestors, beyond the faithful hearts of her hardy mountaineers. Neither the large rewards offered by government for his apprehension, nor the threats held out against any who should shelter or protect him, had the slightest influence on those to whom his safety was committed. To avoid suspicion his place of residence was frequently changed, on which occasion he was always escorted by a few brave and determined friends. Hundreds were from time to time in possession of the secret, and some



were arrested on suspicion of having afforded him an asylum ; but no breath ever conveyed the slightest hint that could lead to his discovery.

It is difficult to conceive the lively interest evinced by all ranks for the safety of this amiable and distinguished nobleman ; and I have been surprised to meet at his residence men who, from the relative situation in which they stood with the government of the country, must have made a considerable sacrifice of their political fears to personal attachment. I was one evening in conversation with Lord Edward, when Colonel L—— entered his apartment, accompanied by two gentlemen with whose persons I was unacquainted, but who, I had reason to believe, were members of the Irish legislature. The colonel, after embracing Lord Edward with the warmest affection, laid on his table a large canvas purse filled with gold, and smiling at his lordship, while he tapped him on the shoulder, “ There,” said he—“ there, my lord, is provision for ——.”

A few hours would have placed Lord Edward at the head of the troops of Kildare ; measures were arranged for this purpose which the government could neither have foreseen nor prevented. But a fatal destiny interposed ; his concealment was discovered through the imprudent zeal of an incautious friend, and after a desperate struggle with an overpowering force, wounded, exhausted, and fallen, the gallant Edward was captured.

Lord Edward was reclining on a couch when the party entered ; they called on him to surrender,—he grasped a dagger,—they instantly fired,—a ball entered his shoulder,—he sunk on the couch. Bleeding and extended on his back he bravely maintained the unequal conflict, killed the leader of their band, wounded a second officer of the party, and only yielded when resistance was no longer availing. Even here his native generosity triumphed ; for on the arrival of surgical aid he declined the proffered assistance, desiring that the first attention should be paid to his wounded antagonists. The surgeon complied with his request, and on his return announced to Lord Edward, who eagerly inquired the result, that Captain Ryan was killed, and Major Swan mortally wounded.\* “ Then, sir,” said he, with

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\* Swan, though severely wounded, recovered.



the mildest composure, "you may dress me. It was a hard struggle,—and are two of them gone?" The surgeon who attended on this occasion is yet living; he can pronounce whether the wounds of Lord Edward were mortal, whether under prudent and skilful attention they might have caused an early or a lingering death, and whether the visits of this humane gentleman, whose skill might have relieved, or kindness soothed the sufferings of his noble patient, were forbidden to his lordship's cell. But the days of the gallant Edward were numbered, and rapid his transition from the dungeon to the tomb. I impeach no man with so foul a deed; forbid it justice and humanity! "The secrets of the prison-house are yet untold;" but, in the emphatical language of his friend and compatriot, O'Connor, "In those days of stalking butchery, for Edward's precious blood not even the semblance of an inquisition has been had." I drop the painful narrative. Short but brilliant was his career;—honoured be his memory. May the virtues of the sire descend on the sons, whose opening promise has arrested the attention of the legislature, and commanded an act of national justice.\*

No man was more truly happy in his domestic circle than Lord Edward Fitzgerald. He possessed the hand and affections of the amiable Pamela, and in this he felt that he possessed kingdoms. He was the favourite of his family, the idol of his sisters, and the pride of his brother, Robert, Duke of Leinster. Loved, admired, and respected by all, he enjoyed a greater portion of happiness than generally falls to the lot of any one individual; and had not the sorrows of his country rankled in his heart, and interrupted the enjoyments with which Heaven had blessed him, he could scarcely be said to have had one earthly wish ungratified. His fortune, though moderate, was ample, for he equally despised the ostentation of the world and the narrow feelings of the ungenerous soul. Hospitable without extravagance, he delighted in the society of his friends and in these hours of domestic enjoyment the lovely Pamela attracted by her lively and fascinating manners the admiration of all,—formed to charm every heart, and command

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\* The act of confiscation which was passed by the late Irish Parliament on the estates of Lord Edward Fitzgerald has recently been repealed by a just and generous act of the British Legislature.

every arm that had not already been enlisted in the cause of Ireland. Ireland was her constant theme, and Edward's glory the darling object of her ambition. She entered into all his views; she had a noble and heroic soul, but the softer feelings of her sex would sometimes betray the anxiety with which she anticipated the approaching contest, and as hopes and fears alternately influenced her mind, she expressed them with all the sensibility characteristic of her country. In the most sweet and impressive tone of voice, rendered still more interesting by her foreign accent and imperfect English, she would, with unaffected simplicity, implore us to protect her Edward. "You are all good Irish," she would say; "Irish are all good and brave, and *Edward is Irish*,—your Edward and my Edward,"—while her dark brilliant eye, rivetted on the manly countenance of her lord, borrowed fresh lustre from the tear which she vainly endeavoured to conceal. These were to me some of the most interesting moments I have experienced, and memory still retraces them with a mingled feeling of pleasure and pain.

I was honoured, on a particular occasion, as the escort of his lovely and interesting wife, a few days ere the hand of death had severed them for ever. I saw her once again! Memory still portrays the lovely mourner wrapt in sable attire; deserted, yet not alone; for the tender pledge of conjugal affection clings to a bosom now insensible to all but sorrow. If beauty interests our feelings, and misfortune claims our sympathy in the ordinary walks of life, shall we refuse it to the high-born—to the illustrious by descent—to the wedded partner of the noble and the brave? A stranger in our land, she was the adopted child of Erin; but, alas! the adopted of her misfortunes.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

*Commencement of hostilities—First military movements—Aylmer commander in Kildare—Encampment of the army of the Union.*

THOUGH wavering councils had for a time retarded its approach, the hour of conflict at length arrived, the sword of resistance was unsheathed, and the banners of defiance unfurled.



The first in the field were the troops of Kildare. Their gallant leader was no more, but his place was supplied by his youthful friend, the bold and enterprising Aylmer. Descended from a family of high respectability and worth, still conspicuous for the virtues which distinguished their ancestors, Aylmer's example produced a powerful effect, while it gave confidence to his associates in arms. Their confidence was not misplaced, and his courage and military talent proved him not undeserving of their choice.

Aylmer had more than ordinary difficulties to contend with. The open and extended plains of Kildare afforded neither mountain nor fastness, where his raw and undisciplined troops could be formed and trained to the exercise of arms. He was therefore at once obliged to marshal them in the plain, and face regular forces, under officers of courage and experience, with a well-appointed commissariat, and a formidable force of cavalry, to which the open situation of the country afforded every facility for attack. These were obstacles which courage, enthusiasm, the confidence of his troops, and their attachment to his person, enabled him to combat; but the anxiety of a generous mind, warmly attached to domestic happiness, and glowing with filial respect, presented a contest much more arduous.

His father, not more venerable in years than in virtues, was a firm adherent to the throne, and no act of aggression on the part of the government could force him to renounce allegiance. Tenderly attached to his son, and alive to the finest feelings of honour, he had seen that son but a short time before surrender his sword and retire from a military station, when a gross indignity had been offered his illustrious friend and commander, Robert, Duke of Leinster, designated by his country "the humane and great." To gratify the faction of the day, the government had determined to humble the pride of Leinster, and a personal insult was levelled against the head of this ancient and illustrious house, by superseding the noble duke in the command of the distinguished regiment over which he presided. On this occasion the venerable Charles Aylmer accompanied his son to the presence of the duke, and, presenting him, exclaimed, "Where Leinster is dishonoured no honour is secure."—"I have received," said the youth, "this sword from your Grace; to your hands I return it untarnished; and may it rust in its



scabbard ere it be drawn to support a faction that have insulted my country in the person of Leinster's duke." The worthy duke was not unmoved by the sentiments which Aylmer had expressed, neither was he insensible to the wrongs of his country. His heart and his judgment were never for a moment estranged from her cause. He wanted the force of character, the spirit of enterprise, and the gallant daring of his brother, but was fully capable of hazard-ing life and fortune when he conceived the rights or interests of his country demanded it.

The elder Aylmer saw the approaching storm—everything bespoke it. He was brave; he was a man of high and exalted virtue, but he had a species of religious veneration for the throne, and did not sufficiently distinguish between the exercise of constitutional authority and *intolerable* oppression. He deplored the determination of his son, and used every argument to dissuade him from the dangerous enterprise. Their mutual attachment was strong, and the conflict of contending passions painful, but youthful ardour, impassioned love of liberty, and a proud impatience of national wrong prevailed. They parted, never again to meet.

The modern system of warfare, and the extraordinary achievements of men little accustomed to arms, would have afforded matter of surprise to the veteran of former days, were it possible to connect the present with the past; but circumstances interwoven with recent occurrences have convinced us that military prowess is not incompatible with youth. We have seen the young warriors of modern France baffle the skill of the most celebrated generals in the combined armies of Europe, and pluck from their brow the laurel which had been earned with honour in many a hard fought field; and we have seen the raw and undisciplined troops of that proud republic scatter veteran battalions which till then were deemed invincible, and whose discipline was the admiration of the world.

The British troops, under experienced officers, had all the advantage which situation and a well-organised system afforded. The capital furnished immense magazines; an open country in front presented a free communication with the several garrisoned towns, between which and the British lines a regular communication was kept open through the

medium of the yeomanry corps, who, for the present, had no more efficient duty to perform.

The ground selected for the Irish camp was well chosen, and no advantage overlooked which circumstances permitted to be turned to account. It was an elevated situation, of considerable extent, surrounded by a friendly country, which was hourly forwarding supplies. At a little distance stood a half dilapidated tower, venerable for its antiquity and the sanctity of its walls, which, in the better days of Ireland, had formed part of a noble structure, raised by our pious ancestors, but demolished in later times by the fanatical followers of the ruthless Cromwell. From the summit of this tower was displayed the flag of Union, simple in its nature and device, but cheering to the hearts of Irishmen, for it was their own—their imperishable green. Here was the spot where the troops of the Union made their first stand; and though blood on either side had already been partially drawn, this was the ground which first presented the appearance of an organized force which merited the appellation of “*The Army of the Union.*”

The active and enterprising spirit of the youthful leader, the bold and determined conduct of his men, and the avowed and inveterate hostility which fired every breast against the enemies of freedom, gave an almost irresistible impulse to all their movements, which more than counterbalanced any deficiency in discipline. The Irish peasant is little acquainted with the comforts of life, or rather he is uniformly familiar with its wants and privations; accustomed to hardship and toil, the discipline of a camp and the perils of warfare are to him less subjects of restraint than of gay variety and manly sport. Men of this description are soon formed into soldiers; warm in attachment, and unconquerable in love of country, they require no stimulant, but rather seem to sport with personal safety in the pursuit of bold and daring enterprise. Of this class a considerable proportion were attached to the army of the Union; their services were invaluable, and their exertions unwearied in the general cause. But the great and imposing force consisted of men of more rational and reflecting minds, whose abhorrence of cruelty and oppression led them to court danger in the open field, rather than submit to the hourly apprehension of insult, torture, and death.



## CHAPTER XIV.

*Opening of the Wexford campaign—Defeat of the British at Oulard—At Enniscorthy—Retreat to Wexford—Advance of the united forces—Deputation from Wexford to the united camp—Destruction of the advanced guard of General Fawcett's army—Second deputation from Wexford, with proposals for surrendering the town—Evacuation of Wexford by the British army—Occupation of it by the united troops—Further successes—Alarm of the Irish government—Generous appeal of Mr. Fox to the British senate—Augmentation of the army.*

WHILE the situation of Kildare was an object of serious concern, a new and more imposing scene presented itself—*Wexford was in arms.*

The naturally peaceable disposition of the inhabitants, and their patience under cruelties to which they were hourly exposed, had encouraged those who inflicted them to greater aggressions; but when the men of Wexford rose they displayed a spirit not calculated on by their assailants, and unprecedented in any country where an undisciplined peasantry had to contend with a regular force. The rapidity of their movements, the boldness of their designs, their courage, perseverance, and astonishing success, had given such powerful ascendancy to their arms as baffled every effort of their enemies, and seemed to threaten the very extinction of the power to which they were opposed.

Oulard was the first scene of action. On the morning of the 27th of May it was occupied by the united forces, for Wexford was *now* united. Here they waited the arrival of the king's troops, who soon advanced to dislodge them. The contest was short, but it was decisive. The royal division cut to pieces, the yeomanry fled; of the former four soldiers only with their colonel escaped.

The battle of Oulard gave confidence to the united troops; the following day they marched on Enniscorthy. After a brave resistance on the part of the garrison, numbers having fallen on each side, the courage and impetuosity of the people prevailed, and they became masters of the town. The routed army fled to Wexford, where everything was in the highest state of alarm, and measures were immediately resorted to for a general defence.



Wexford, the chief town of the county, was a garrison of some importance. In addition to its former force, with the remains of the army from Enniscorthy, it received reinforcements of all the surrounding yeomanry corps, and a supply of artillery and experienced officers from Duncannon fort, then under the command of the British general, Fawcett, who was preparing to march in person with further relief. Everything at first bespoke a determined and manly defence, but the united troops, flushed with conquest, and fired with resentment of recent wrongs, having marched from Enniscorthy, and encamped on Vinegar Hill, neither the formidable position of the town, protected by walls and defended by cannon, nor a garrison of 1200 effective men, with Fawcett marching to its relief, could allay the fears which their appearance had excited. After mature deliberation, it was considered prudent to address the united forces, through the medium of those who possessed their confidence. Amongst the state prisoners confined in the gaol of Wexford, were three gentlemen of fortune and high respectability—Messrs. Colclough, Fitzgerald, and Harvey. These gentlemen were solicited to use their influence to induce the united troops to retire, and commissioned by the civil and military authorities to act as arbitrators between the *royal* garrison of Wexford and an undisciplined *rebel* force. Colclough and Fitzgerald were deputed on this extraordinary mission, while Harvey remained in prison as a hostage for their return.

On the arrival of the commissioners within the united lines they were welcomed with a cheer, which, in the language of the day, made Wexford ring. Little time was lost in parley—the very offer betrayed the weakness of the party who proposed it; instant orders were given to march, and “*to Wexford! to Wexford!*” was re-echoed from man to man. Fitzgerald was adored by the people; him they detained in the camp. Colclough was treated with all the respect due to his worth, and despatched to Wexford to announce their immediate advance. It was not an idle threat, for the next morning exhibited their approach in a bristly grove of pikes, glittering from the summit of the three rocks on the mountain of Forth.

Here the united troops halted for the night, and cut off the advance of General Fawcett’s army on its march from the fort of Duncannon to the relief of Wexford. The entire

of the advanced guard perished, save one subaltern officer and a few privates, who remained prisoners. General Fawcett, learning this disaster, hastily retreated with the main body of his army. So rapidly did this pass, that the garrison of Wexford was in total ignorance of the occurrence, at the short distance of three miles from the scene of action.

The expected advance of General Fawcett's army, which it was calculated must at that time have been within view of the enemy's camp, induced the garrison of Wexford to try the effect of a sally. This proved unsuccessful: the leader of the expedition having fallen, the troops retreated with precipitation back on the town. All was now terror and dismay. Again the authorities assembled, and the result of their deliberation was an appeal to the generosity of Harvey, whom they prevailed upon to address a conciliatory letter to the camp, which was forwarded through the medium of a second deputation, who were instructed to propose the immediate surrender of the town on condition that life and property should be spared. The united forces required that the arms and ammunition of the garrison should be likewise given up. Commissioners proceeded from the camp to Wexford to arrange the articles, but on their arrival they found the town evacuated by the British troops. The greatest possible consternation prevailed: soldiers flying in every direction without order or arrangement; officers, yeomen, and magistrates hurrying for safety to the ships; whilst numbers hastened to the prison to place themselves under the protection of the benevolent Harvey.

Fortunately Fitzgerald had now arrived. He was accosted by the chief magistrate, and implored to use his influence with the people to procure a peaceful entry. Courage and humanity are nearly allied, and the brave Fitzgerald exercised all the influence he possessed. The mild advocate of peace this moment, a proud rebel in arms the hour before. The town was entered by the people, and the green banner displayed from its walls; they hastened to the prison, where they released the unfortunate captives, and proclaimed *Beauchamp Bagnal Harvey, commander-in-chief*.

The mad infatuation of the fugitive garrison only added to the popular excitement. Every unfortunate peasant whom they met in their retreat was butchered without mercy—age or sex afforded no protection. Women and children were



victims to their indiscriminating fury; houses were plundered and burned in their disorderly march, and even the temple of divine worship was fired by their sacrilegious hands. Is our country then to be reproached for the comparatively partial reprisals which in some instances an insulted and maddened people were goaded to inflict? But never, throughout the entire contest, from the commencement of hostilities till the fatal scene was closed, can we trace on the part of the people a single act of insult to female honour. The first general proclamation concluded in these memorable words: "Soldiers of Erin, remember your homes; let the domestic hearth never be violated, nor the arms of the nation sullied by cruelty or revenge. Bear in mind that the weak and the defenceless claim your protection, and that retaliation is only the weapon of the coward and the slave. Let this be engraven on your hearts, and let it be proclaimed to the extremity of our land, that *insult to female honour, contempt of orders, pillage and desertion, shall be punished with death.*"

While the town of Wexford remained in possession of the people encampments were formed in different quarters of the country; between these and the royalist troops, which garrisoned the several towns, many and sanguinary conflicts took place.

From the garrison of Ross frequent excursions were made, which occasioned great distress to the surrounding country; and this the united troops, from their deficiency in cavalry, had not the means of resisting. The circumstance, however, led to the formation of a body whose services afterwards were conspicuous and important. The command on this occasion was committed to Mr. Thomas Clony, a gentleman qualified for any undertaking where courage and conduct were requisite. He charged at the head of his new levies, drove the marauders precipitately before him, and succeeded in protecting the country from their further depredations. No man was better suited for the undertaking; bold and decisive, but generous and humane, he distinguished himself in every action he fought, not more by his courage than his humanity.

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\* The unfortunate massacre of Scullabogue will be noticed in its proper place.



The memorable transactions of this short but bloody campaign were executed with an unparalleled promptitude. At one moment we find the town of Gory hastily abandoned by the king's troops, who, as if panic-struck, precipitately fled, without even an effort to retain it. Again, Newtown Barry, as rapidly assailed by the popular force, carried, and in almost the same hour regained by the royal army. Every day produced fresh conflicts, while the popular forces, always on the alert, were generally the assailants.

The town of Gory, from its local position, was considered a station of much importance. It was well supplied; the British commanders having conceived the idea of terminating the war by a *coup-de-main*, had thrown large supplies into the garrison. General Loftus had just arrived with an additional force of fifteen hundred men, the neighbouring garrisons were in readiness, and it was resolved that on the following day all these forces in conjunction should march on the united camp at Carrigrew.

The royal army marched from Gory in two divisions; one under the immediate command of General Loftus, by a more circuitous route; the other was led on by Colonel Walpole, direct for the camp. The troops were in high spirits; their numbers, discipline, and well concerted arrangements, left no room to doubt of success. But the camp of Carrigrew was not less on the alert—it had formed the bold determination of attacking Gory, and the united troops were now actually on their march. A little time brought them in contact with the army under the command of Walpole. The meeting was unexpected on both sides. The action immediately commenced—Walpole fell—his troops gave way, and the rout became general—his cannon fell into the hands of the people. The united army, following up its victory, pursued the fugitives to the town of Gory, through which they passed with the utmost precipitation. From Gory they retreated to Arklow, where, in a council of war hastily convened, it was determined to abandon that town, and some of the terrified fugitives pursued their route till they at length found shelter in the capital.

Loftus, at the head of his division, was only apprised of the action by the report of the cannon; he hastened to the relief of Walpole, but arrived too late. The body of that unfortunate commander and his slain companions around

him but too fully announced the fate of the day. Loftus halted on the field, doubtful for a moment what course to pursue, then marched back for Gory; but the cannon of Walpole, which had now changed masters, opposed his entrance.

This decisive victory placed the entire county of Wexford, with the exception of Ross, Newtown Barry, and Duncannon Fort, in the hands of the people.

It was now that the Irish government became seriously alarmed. They had kindled a war in the heart of the country, and it was doubtful whether they possessed the power of extinguishing it. The incessant marching and countermarching of the troops, the fatigues they encountered, the losses they had sustained, the several posts they had been forced to abandon, all tended to lower that spirit with which they were animated on first taking the field. Prudence, if not humanity, seemed to favour conciliation, and even the man who was amongst the first to make his offering at the altar of union, and had so far wandered from his early path, seemed now to doubt the policy of the measures which in this eventful crisis must either secure a legislative union with Britain, or sever the connection for ever. The hazard was desperate, but the die was cast.

Intemperate councils had placed the country on the brink of ruin, and the more reflecting on both sides looked with awful suspense to the result. Mr. Fox, ever sensitively alive to the honour of his country and the feelings of humanity, again appealed to the British senate, and implored the minister to halt in his desperate career, and extend, ere it should be too late, the hand of conciliation to Ireland. "I hold," said he, "documents incontrovertible, which shew that this sanguinary contest has already cost His Majesty's forces the loss of ten thousand men;" and in the name of justice and humanity he moved for an inquiry into the state of Ireland.\* The feeling and energetic appeal of Mr. Fox was ineffectual, and with it the last hope of conciliation fled.

The armies of Britain were now augmented, orders were given for a more vigorous pursuit of hostilities, and in some

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\* From an army return lately published, it appears that the sum total of effective bayonets employed in Ireland prior to the Act of Union amounted to 114,000, at the computed expense of four millions of money per annum.

quarters it was intimated that *no prisoners should be made*. Hence it frequently happened, that the number who fell on the field bore no proportion with those who were the victims of an exterminating vengeance.

When we consider the number of troops engaged, the rank and distinction of the commanders, and the immense preparations for reducing a single country, we may form some idea of the importance that government attached to the Wexford campaign. After so many severe conflicts between the British and the united troops, it was now evident that Wexford could only be reduced by an overwhelming force; and we find, with others, the following British officers employed in this service:—Lieutenants-General Lake and Dundas; Majors-General Needham, Duff, Hunter, Loftus, Eustace, Johnston, Gascoyne; and Brigadiers-General Moore, Grose, &c. The opposition which this force encountered was evident proof that government had not overrated the courage of the foe.

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## CHAPTER XV.

*State of Leinster—Hill of Tara—Battle—Defeat, and rout of the united forces—Alymer in Kildare.*

WHILE Wexford continued the principal theatre of war, several contests had taken place in other counties of Leinster; but the proximity of these counties to the capital enabled government to use more prompt measures for their suppression, while the remote situation of others afforded greater facilities for the conjunction of the people, who, when once formed, under men of enterprise and popular confidence, became irresistible. Wexford possessed a host of leaders of this description, who displayed talents of the first order for the field. Her efforts were in consequence more powerful and important in their results.

Many of the Leinster leaders, and principally of the more northern counties, had been arrested, and a system of intimidation which had been adopted in some quarters, produced a powerful effect on the feelings of the people. When a rising of the populace was apprehended, orders were given



to put the prisoners to death on the first signal of alarm. Many were in consequence restrained from personal attachment to their leaders, fearing to involve their safety in the uncertain issue of a contest. Those who had taken the field were generally without efficient officers ; and though they displayed abundant qualities characteristic of the soldier, their arrangements were often defective ; for without a power to control or a hand to direct, they could neither avail themselves of the advantages which local situation afforded, nor retrieve the errors into which their native impetuosity too often led them.

This circumstance was never more conspicuous than in the disastrous affairs of Meath. Admirably posted on the princely hill of Tara, and with a force sufficient to combat twice the number of their assailants, they had not an officer who knew the advantage of the ground, or to whose sole authority they acknowledged obedience. Each separate leader of division looked only to those who were under his immediate control ; and though they were qualified for inferior command, none assumed that superiority, so essential to the direction of the field, in the arrangement of forces who had no combined system of action. Had they marched under men who possessed the talents of Fitzgerald, of Redmond, of Clony, of Roche, or a hundred others, whose names are conspicuous in the Wexford campaign, Tara would not have been the field of an easy-bought victory, where courage was abundant, and arrangement only deficient.

Tara had been the seat of the ancient grandeur of our country, the theme of her poet, and the strain of her bard. It was the splendid court of her kings and the hospitable hall of her chiefs. In the heart of Leinster, and the most fertile district of the province, surrounded by inexhaustible supplies, and commanding rich and flourishing towns within two hours' march of its summit, Tara presented a station for an army, which, being once concentrated, the capital could not have maintained itself eight-and-forty hours.

That Tara should have been selected as the theatre of national contest, associated with the proud remembrance of ancient greatness, and combining, from local situation, every advantage for defence, evinced a mind capable of much discernment, and not unacquainted with the powerful feelings which stimulate the human breast. But the very advantage

of situation tended to facilitate defeat. Had the united forces been less confident of their ground, they would in all probability have proceeded with less temerity.

On the advance of the enemy they quitted their strong position, and descending from the summit to the lower declivity of the hill, rushed with impetuosity on the British troops who were advancing. The infantry fled, unable to resist the charge of the pike, but they were quickly supported by cavalry and cannon; and while the apparently victorious troops were pursuing their success, they were alternately charged by the horse, and raked by a galling fire from the artillery. The phalanx being broken, they had no rallying point nor reserve; no hand to retrieve the error which their impetuosity had occasioned. Encompassed by a brave and disciplined army, exposed on the wide grassy plain, which presented no interruption to the movement of the cavalry, or the deadly action of the cannon, the united forces were completely routed. Many returned to their homes, the most determined remained in arms, and proceeded to join the ranks of the brave and persevering Aylmer.

Aylmer was pursuing at this time a species of fugitive warfare. Totally defective in artillery, and commanding in an open champaign country, he was unable to maintain, for any considerable time, a stationary war; but the velocity with which he moved, and the prompt decision that marked his action, rendered him a more formidable foe, and his warfare more harassing and destructive to his enemies. At night on the extended plains of Kildare, in the morning twenty miles in advance, cutting off the supplies of the enemy, storming their posts, or driving back the advance of their enemy in full march to lay waste some devoted village or town; always on the alert, indefatigable in his pursuits, and exhaustless in enterprise, his military character seemed a perfect copy of the "great Dundee." Even after the termination of the Wexford campaign, the defeat of the united forces in Ulster, and general cessation of hostilities, we find Aylmer at the head of his invincible band; winning, by his courage and his conduct the admiration of hostile ranks, and never laying down the arms which he had borne with manly pride, until the last of his companions were guaranteed in life and safety, by solemn treaty with the British general Dundas.



## CHAPTER XVI.

*General state of the country after the commencement of hostilities—  
Illustrative anecdotes.*

FROM the period that hostilities commenced, and, in some districts, prior to that event, no one was permitted to remove from his residence without a passport, descriptive of his person, occupation, and pursuit; arrest, and not unfrequently corporal punishment, was the result of omission. Those, of course, who were suspected of hostility to the government, or a good understanding with the people, found it difficult, if not impracticable, to procure passports. Sometimes they were obtained under feigned names, but detection always increased the penalty; in fact, the man who was not now the acknowledged partisan of government was held in a state of political excommunication.

Circumstances interesting to our family had rendered an interview with my younger brother of importance. This could not be effected without difficulty and personal danger; it was, however, accomplished, and the circumstances under which we met and parted will be to me a subject of reflection for the few fleeting hours of life.

Our meeting was at the house of a venerable friend, and rendered still more interesting to my brother and myself, from the generous anxiety which he evinced for our mutual safety. He had suffered in the general calamity of his country, and in the most vulnerable point of human feelings; he had been deprived of an only son, the prop of declining years, and the blooming hope of a father's fondest wishes. My brother's youthful and interesting appearance peculiarly engaged his attention. Tall, finely formed, and scarcely seventeen years of age, he seemed to recall to the memory of our friend the irretrievable loss he had so lately sustained. He placed himself between us, and taking the hand of my brother, with the most impressive look of paternal solicitude, he implored him to forego his intention. "If it must be," said he, "let one victim suffice; but do you, my child, remain with me; your hour will yet come, your destiny perhaps too soon." His eye glistened with the tear which betrayed a sorrowful recollection as he spoke, and pressing



the hand which was still retained in his, "You will supply," said he, "the place of him who is gone. I will talk to you of his virtues, his attachment to his country, his fidelity to her cause, and I will bless the hour that has given a second birth to the hopes that were lost, but restored in you." My brother endeavoured to conceal the emotion which he was unable to suppress; it was a trial almost too much for the generous feelings of his nature, but he was firm—he was resolved. "May Heaven then be your pilot!" exclaimed our friend, "for you embark on troubled waters. Rest for the day, and by the favour of night you can proceed with greater safety. Divide your course: yours," addressing me, "to the right, and yours, my child, to the left—it is more secure." He traced, in imagination, every foot of ground—this quarter friendly, that in possession of the foe; here the windings of the river to be followed, there the mountain's base; on the right the valley of blood, where the red arm of Ulster bore his arms in pride; on the left, the lofty Kairn, where the pride of Ulster sleeps in peace. The day was far spent; it was too short for our friend in providing for our safety, in retracing the glories of the past, or anticipating hopes for the future. His cheek was furrowed, but the snows of seventy winters had failed in quenching the fire of youthful patriotism which still glowed in his breast, and the sorrows of the parent were for a time forgotten, as the recollection of the fame of his country or her miseries prevailed. The moments rapidly passed; we had toasted "The land of the brave, and the soul that deserves to be free," when the cloud of night announced the hour of departure.

Journeying in a north-westerly direction, near the ancient village of Ardcath, I was accosted by a small band, which formed one of the out-posts of a formidable body assembled near the centre of the plain, and which was every moment augmented by fresh numbers, who came pouring in with arms of every description, from the polished musket to the rudest formed pike. The vigilant guard soon challenged my approach, and in a moment I was surrounded. "A friend or a foe," was the hurried salutation; and, before time was given for a reply—"If a friend, prove yourself and advance." "I am a friend," said I, "but I have not the countersign—lead me to your commander."

The commander, who had observed the occurrence from

some distance, was already advancing ; he was mounted on a horse of high mettle, fully armed, with a sword, a large case of pistols in his belt, and a carbine suspended from his saddle. A light beaver, turned up on one side, exhibited a large green cockade surmounted by a white feather. This military appearance was not unbecoming his character ; and was further improved by a fine person and a manly deportment. He saluted me with some courtesy, but with an evident coolness, which seemed to imply, "We are not friends." I returned the salutation with more confidence, and with somewhat of military etiquette. "What is your business within our lines, sir?" demanded the chief ; "do you come to join our standard as a friend, or to betray our position to the enemy?" "I come," said I, "in neither character, though a friend to the liberties of my country—I would speak with you apart. I shall satisfy your doubts, and then, with your permission, proceed."

We retired a little beyond the circle of the guard. Some of the band, however, seemed to express displeasure, and in a half-concealed whisper it was murmured that the stranger's designs were false, that he was the bearer of conditions from the enemy, and proposals of safety and surrender for their chief. The alarm spread with rapidity, and the consequences would perhaps have been fatal to the object of their suspicion, had not their commander immediately pressed forward, and presenting me, exclaimed, "He is a friend to Ireland—long persecuted in her cause ;" and snatching the cumbrous cockade from his cap, he waved it in triumph over my head, while its plaudits were re-echoed by the cheers of thousands. Unhappily I bore a name which had been but too familiar with the misfortunes of my country, and as if in atonement for the ungenerous doubts which but a moment before were entertained, kindness and confidence were now carried to the very bounds of excess. Haversacks were opened, canteens in abundance presented, and the friend (for I was a stranger no longer) was solicited to partake of the homely fare which had been hastily prepared for the contingencies of the field.

"They are not yet returned," said a venerable old man, leaning on his pike, "and I don't much *like* the delay ; it is more than two hours since they left us, and they have not four miles to march." "The duty was easy," observed



another ; "they had only to surround the garrison and disarm them without firing a gun." "They will loiter their time in parley," said a third, "till the Dumfries come up: the boy is bold, to be sure, but he is young." The subject of uneasiness proceeded, not so much on account of the delay, as impatience on the part of those who spoke. A detachment had been marched off about two hours before to disarm a corps under the command of Sir William Dillon, whose mansion was the garrison, and whose tenantry, trained to arms, were the guardians of the depôt. Little resistance was expected, and the acquisition of the arms was desirable; fifty stand of prime muskets, which formed the pride and amusement of the knight to exhibit on gala days in all the pomp of military parade. To perform this little service, as it was termed, a party had been despatched under the command of young Carroll, a fine youth of much promise, and endeared to the people by the most engaging manners and enthusiastic attachment to their cause. "We must send a reinforcement," said the chief; "and if our friend undertakes the service, Sir William's arms shall honour him with a salute before he leaves us." I expressed my acknowledgments for the intended honour, and the confidence reposed, but excused myself on a feeling of delicacy towards the young soldier, whose pride would be justly offended should another interfere with his duty.

At this moment the approach of young Carroll was announced, and the sight was a cheering one to his companions. He marched on foot at the head of his little detachment, with open and extended lines, in the centre of which some of the scarlet uniforms of the knight's corps formed a curious contrast with the green, grey, and motley dress of the musketeers and sturdy pikemen who guarded them. A drum, two fifes, and a bugle—to the notes of which the corps had often marched in pomp round the worthy knight's domain—were part of the spoil; and as the detachment ascended the hill at a quick and lively pace, the musicians strained every nerve to the popular and national air of "Patrick's Day," while the green flag, waving in the centre of the line, gave a picturesque appearance to the field as the band advanced to deposit the arms. The chief saluted the green emblem of Erin as it fluttered in the breeze, and with his head uncovered and his right hand



extended to heaven, he prayed that the banners of his country might be ever victorious.

I had now an opportunity of regarding the person of the young Carroll with more particular attention. The rising traits of manly beauty were conspicuous in his person. Not exceeding twenty years of age, he had all the deportment of riper manhood; a countenance intelligent and interesting portrayed a heart sensibly alive to all the finer feelings of honour—brave, generous, and humane. This was the first day in which he had borne arms, and he bore them with a manly courage.

“A guard!” cried the chief. “A guard!” was vociferated to the extremity of the line. The nimble pikemen pressed forward, and the contest was warm who should have the honour of escorting their countryman. “Allow me,” said I, “to decline the honour of a guard—I am not apprehensive of danger.” “You pass a military station,” said the chief, “about four miles to the east; our lads will conduct you beyond it, and return.” “I will trust to fortune,” I replied, “which has so far befriended me; the appearance of a guard would disturb the confidence of the enemy, and lead to a premature action, for which you are not yet prepared.”

Carroll accompanied me beyond the lines; and during the short period we passed together, he gained much on my estimation. He seemed, however, not very sanguine of success. He had no fear of the enemy, but he dreaded the intoxicating liquors in which some of his troops were too much disposed to indulge. Full of vivacity like the youth of his country, all animation and spirit, yet even in our short intercourse I could perceive more than once a pensive expression in his fine features, which was as quickly succeeded by the most fascinating smile. We walked slowly together, while my horse was led by the orderly that followed him. He seemed unwilling to leave me; and on parting, as if impressed with a foreknowledge of his fate, he exclaimed, “We shall never again meet.”

His words were but too prophetic. The confidence of his countrymen assigned him an important command a few days after he had made his first essay in arms. He was successful in the onset, and victory followed his bold and judicious arrangements; but, cheering his men in pursuit of the flying foe, his horse bore him to the midst of the hostile

ranks, and in their flight he was hurried with precipitation from the field. Carroll was borne to the dungeon. The firmness of his mind supported him in the hour of trial. The last consolation of religion was denied him, but he met his death with Christian and manly firmness. The sanguinary Sandys can report the rest.\*

I have had to mourn the fate of many a dear and gallant friend in the disastrous struggles of my country, but few are more deserving of remembrance than the young and interesting Carroll. Presuming on his youth, the infernal Sandys endeavoured to prevail on him to purchase life at the sacrifice of his honour; and the peculiar situation in which the family of Carroll were placed, afforded hopes in the mind of the monster that the offer might be acceded to. Carroll spurned the proposal with all the pride of insulted virtue. Hour after hour he was assailed with offers of life and promise of reward for the impeachment of his companions. "You know my companions," he replied, "such as have escaped your vengeance, are in arms and will defend themselves; those who have fallen into your hands are already sacrificed." The unprotected state of his widowed mother and one only dear and beloved sister were often recalled to his remembrance. It was this, indeed, which struck him to the tenderest fibre of his heart, yet nerved that heart with more heroic firmness. "The virtuous," he exclaimed, "have the especial protection of Heaven—your ruffians *dare* not harm them."

Carroll had imbibed early sentiments of religion, and it was idly hoped that the withholding in the hour of death the consolation which religion imparts, would enfeeble a mind on which earthly considerations could make no impression. "'Tis vain," cried Carroll, "the Almighty demands nothing beyond our power;—his brightest attribute is mercy." These

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\* Sandys, the provost-major, whose brutal and savage nature marked him a fit agent for the inhuman government of which he was the willing tool, delighted in the torture of his unhappy victims, and heightened their misery by withholding, at the awful hour of death, the consoling balm of religion, which the most savage enemy will not deny. Even the rites of sepulture were withheld, and public feeling outraged by the disgusting exhibition of Algerine cruelty, in the mutilation of the body and the impalement of the victim's head. I have been lately informed, that this monster of human depravity ended his days in poverty, wretchedness, and the execration of mankind.



melancholy particulars of poor Carroll's last hours I had from a gentleman of veracity, who was at that time his fellow-prisoner in *Sandys' Provost*, and who, were he now within the reach of my communication, would not refuse me the sanction of his name. He joined Carroll a few moments previous to his execution, in the last religious duties, of which the brutal Sandys could not deprive him—an appeal to Heaven for the freedom of his country. The body of Carroll, after having been treated with every indignity, was buried, with others of his brave companions, under a heap of rubbish in one of the outlets of the city.

On quitting Carroll, I found it impossible, for some time, to regain my spirits; the gloom which at that moment hung on his mind, sympathy seemed to have communicated to my own. In the worst vicissitudes of life I have not been accustomed to despond, but I felt at this moment an irresistible desire to indulge in melancholy. I had ridden a few miles—all was calm and quiet around me, nothing agitated, save the feelings of my own mind. The night was clear as noon-day; and I now perceived that I had reached the military station, of which I had been so lately apprised; the approach of my horse, I presume, had alarmed the sentinel, for the nightly guard was under arms. To attempt a retreat would have betrayed me, to advance with confidence was my only hope—"All well within?" "All's well!" was the reply. I passed, and with no little delight in finding my progress uninterrupted.

To a simple but fortuitous circumstance I owed my safety. Being well mounted, and dressed in a blue frock riding-coat, the yeomanry guard conceived, perhaps, that I was on military duty; and in this opinion I was the more confirmed, from the suspicions that my appearance had excited amongst my gray-coated countrymen but two hours before.

This little occurrence, while it gave me confidence, taught me caution. I banished all gloomy reflections, and quickening my pace, two hours brought me to the banks of the Boyne, to the very spot where the Dutchman passed a hundred and eight years before. "*Again*," said I, "for Ireland," and crossed the river.

It was now full time, if not to refresh myself, at least to procure something for the faithful animal that had borne me



so far—nearly twenty Irish miles, in a circuitous route, since our last halt. Irishmen are not always provident, and it was only when provision was necessary that I began to consider where I should procure it. I was perfectly acquainted with the country; the village of Collon lay on my left, Drogheda to the right, and Slane about four miles in a westerly direction higher up the river; these places were garrisoned either by regulars or yeomanry, and I had no disposition to place myself under the protection of either. I was strongly impelled by the desire of refreshing honest Skreen to push for the first farm-house, but the association of ideas connected with the scene before me flowed so rapidly on my imagination that I felt as if rivetted to the spot; and, though saturated with wet, for the influx of the tide had swollen the river on my passage, I could not prevail on myself to quit it. Yonder was posted the pusillanimous James—here his more fortunate rival. This column records the glories of one; the dark hill of Donoer recalls the disgrace of the other. The river in front, with Duleek rising in the rear, even to this day presents an inviting field for contest. Here the narrow defile, through which the English marched, where science and courage were alike displayed—yonder, to the west, the bridge, equidistant from both armies, and unoccupied by either, until the fatal mistake, at the same moment, rendered it the object of contention. Deep in the channel through which I had passed, Schomberg nobly fell; while the cavalry, under the gallant Hamilton, charged in the flood, bravely resisted the British advance, upholding for a time the honour of the day; thus covering the retreat of the fugitive monarch, who was unworthy of command. Alas! poor Ireland, your fidelity to princes has ever been destructive to your rights.

Honest Skreen shook his mane; whether in accordance with my feelings, or to discharge the drops that came trickling down his crest, it served to remind me that the reminiscence of 1690 was poor forage for a weary charger.

I have always been attached to the ancient names of my country, and when associated with national achievements they are doubly objects of my respect. I now recollected that about a mile to the north a lineal descendant of the illustrious Sarsfield occupied a small farm, and though he had sunk so much from the splendour, he had not lost a

particle of the pride of his ancestors. His cabin was in a bleak situation on the great northern road, and the ungenerous soil around it, with the utmost dint of labour, could barely supply the necessaries of life. Sarsfield, however, was not in indigent circumstances when compared with many others. He had improved his situation by that species of industry to which some of the descendants of our ancient princes have been obliged to bend; in plain English, he entertained the traveller at the expense of his guest; he sold good liquor, and the house of honest Sarsfield had *good call*.

Leaving the Boyne with all its disastrous recollections behind me, I passed over William's ground of encampment, and soon reached the modern castle of Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan. I knocked, but not rudely; I respected the fallen glories of my country; for the heath-covered mountain is a domain, and the cottage a castle, where the hero dwells. I had not long to wait—mine host soon attended; and had I not already been prepossessed in his favour, his appearance must at once have commanded my respect.

He was a man of almost gigantic stature, but so perfectly formed, of such admirable symmetry in every limb, that it was only when the eye had taken the separate dimensions of each that you perceived his vast superiority over the ordinary race of men. Though he had never mixed beyond the peasant circle, there was a suavity in his manners, and a courtesy in his deportment, which would have led the observer at once to pronounce him a gentleman whom the blight of fortune had sunk below that rank in society which nature had designed him to fill. He took hold of my horse, while he invited me to occupy a seat, pointing at the same time to the old Irish fashioned straw-chair, which, from its cumbrous size, is considered a fixture, and generally placed in a comfortable nook convenient to the fire. "Pardon me," said I, "I shall lead my horse to the stable;" and taking the bridle from his hand, "the descendant of Sarsfield shall never be *my* groom." This expression, pronounced with some degree of feeling, won on the moment his confidence and heart. "Welcome," said he, "to Sarsfield, and a thousand times welcome."

We soon adjusted the little matter of etiquette; and having provided for my horse, I returned with my kind host, who was all anxiety to procure me the best entertainment his



cottage could afford: "But, in the name of St. Bridget!" he exclaimed, observing the exhalation from my clothes, "have you been swimming the Boyne?" "Even so, Sarsfield," I replied, "and at the precise spot where your gallant ancestor would have changed generals to fight the battle over again." The expression of delight which animated Sarsfield's countenance I shall never forget. Springing from his seat, he grasped me by the arm; "Come," said he, "come, and I will show you the ground where he stood, rallying his countrymen, and calling on his *runaway* king to stand like a man." "Stop, my friend," said I, "I have got quite enough of the Boyne for this night—would that all the enemies of our country were as deep in it as I have been." "And may the devil take him," said Sarsfield, "who would take *them* out; and now"—filling up a bumper—"we will drink to the memory of those who have fallen." "May the heavens be their bed!" rejoined my host, "and may an Irish heart never bleed for a faithless king." I did justice to the rejoinder of my friend, and depositing a small piece of money on the table, I was about to depart, when he accosted me with a look, in which the feelings of pride, displeasure, and respect were blended. "Sarsfield's cabin is too humble," said he, "to entertain an Irish gentleman, but a true Irish heart would not refuse the only cheer it could offer; take this back, if Sarsfield's friendship is worth your keeping." The mind of my generous host was too penetrating not to have perceived, from the moment I entered, that I considered myself under the protection of a friend, and this protection I am satisfied he would have afforded me, even at the peril of his life. On parting, he cheered me with one of those old sayings which the native Irish have always at command, and peculiarly adapted to every situation in life. "Remember," said he, and his countenance was still more expressive than his language—"remember, the darkest hour in the twenty-four is the hour before day."

I hurried over the dreary country which extends for two miles from Sarsfield's cabin, reflecting on the policy which constitutes the stranger a friend and the native a foe. Curse on the barbarous line of distinction!

Leaving the great northern road on my right, and striking off a few miles to the west, I had little difficulty in passing through a country, which, although it bore a share in the



general calamities of Ireland, was not the theatre of civil contest; neither was I a stranger in this peaceful district. I sheltered for a time under the battlements of the ancient Roach, venerable in its ruins, and still formidable in position, nobly picturesque of former greatness. Overhanging one of the richest valleys in Leinster, it is at the same time a monument of her pride and a boundary of her province; while its dilapidated towers recall to our mind the hateful remembrance of her despoilers. The fair country extending to the east, and bounded by an inlet of the Irish sea, was occupied by a strong military force, while the lofty Slieve Gullion, on the left, afforded a shelter, in its deep cavities and impassable rocks, to the houseless inhabitants, whose cottages were only discernible by the smoking ruins. I took a sorrowful survey of the heart-rending scene. I looked in vain for the once-happy residence of a dear and much-loved friend;—not a trace remained; it had been pillaged and consumed the summer before, and the wild grass now covered the former site of hospitality and friendship.

Winding round the base of the mountain, I perceived a band of licensed ruffians returning from one of their nocturnal excursions. Their *captain* was absent, but his spirit rested with his companions. His mansion was on the inhospitable moor, but his residence was not more barren than his mind; its illumination was the blaze of the cottage, and the screech of his tortured victim was the only sound grateful to his ear: the plunder of the widow has not increased his wealth, for the curses of his countrymen have blasted what the blight of the mountain might have spared.

The incendiaries occupied the only ground in this marshy quarter which afforded me a passage. Fortunately, they were in the very act of quarrelling about the division of their midnight plunder; the contest was warm, and some of the party had proceeded to blows. I spurred forward, and with an assumed confidence inquired the cause of their dispute. Two of the party complained loudly of the injustice of their companions. They were all under the influence of intoxication. I presented them with a small sum of money, and bade them go drink and be friends for the *honour* of the corps. Blessed guardians of public peace, the prop of the state and the security of the throne! But wretched country, when the **just** complaints of the people are replied

to by stripes, and a bigoted minority is armed against the union and happiness of a nation.

My eye was soon relieved by a prospect which embraces the grand and sublime in the works of nature. Conducted by a narrow winding pass, under rocky cliffs, which at a distance seem impervious to the approach of man, one is almost imperceptibly led to the summit of a lofty mountain overhanging the deep dark bay of Carlingford, and so awfully perpendicular that the boldest nerves recoil from the contemplated descent—but terror in a moment gives place to delight, while the eye rapidly wanders over the beauties that burst upon the view. The majestic hills that encircle the bold expanding bay, decked by the hand of nature in all the grandeur of the towering forest—the whitened canvas, the lively streamers that flutter from a thousand masts, while the stoutest seamen seem pigmies on the busy deck beneath; husbandry, commerce, manufactures, with all the embellishments of taste, have combined to enrich the scenery of this enchanting prospect. The bases of the lofty mountains are studded with mansions of the finest architectural taste, while the deep intervening valley, washed by the limpid waters of the bay, presents the neat and humble cottage, whose milk-white walls form an enlivening contrast with the shadowing green, reflected from the oak and lofty pine, rising like the undulating wave to the mountain's top. Descending from the craggy steep, I made haste to cross the "*narrowed water's point*."

The boats on this ferry, though rudely formed, are safe, and not incommodious for the conveyance of man and horse. I found it difficult, however, to procure one, but that difficulty proceeded from a circumstance which was peculiarly favourable to my situation. The opposite side of the ferry was the estate of a gentleman of some notoriety; he had been an early Liberal, and his name is recorded as an original member of the Northern Whig club, in the same column with that of his countryman Lord Castlereagh, celebrating in the town of Belfast "The glorious era of the French revolution," and crowning the night with libations to "*Our Sovereign Lord the People*." A few short years, however, had accomplished a no less extraordinary revolution in the political sentiments of both. One had become a minister of state, the other had arrived to the high distinction of captain-commandant of a yeomanry corps! Happily



for my security, the captain and his corps were now at church, supplicating the God of union and peace to distract the councils that bade France be free, and scatter the arms that threatened the expulsion of despotism from Europe. Our virtuous government had decreed this a day of solemn thanksgiving; the yeomanry had been early on parade, and their pious captain had withdrawn the guard from the ferry side, that all might do honour to that formula of prayer, which the zeal of the church and the wisdom of the state had promulgated. All was silent—the village was hushed—I passed: “This,” said I, “is truly a day of grace; torture has been suspended for an *hour*.”

Had not Providence favoured me at this critical moment, in all human probability I should not have survived to report the occurrence. I was unconscious of the ferry at any time being guarded. I remained some time on the shore, in fretful impatience, hailing a boat; and, surprised at the caution with which the ferryman proceeded, it was only then I learned the situation of affairs on the opposite side. I had no alternative but to proceed. As I approached the ferry from the Leinster side, the town of Newry lay some miles before me, inclining to the left; between the town and the ferry there was no passage, the intervening space being occupied by the river and canal. The bay of Carlingford was on my right, and necessity compelled the adoption of the middle course. To me it proved fortunate.

The religious rites of the day had terminated, when the next after me in succession, the humane and kind-hearted Black, crossed the ferry. He had scarcely pressed the shore, when he was rudely seized, suspended by the neck, and though life was not extinguished, he experienced all the terrors and the pains of death. This was a species of punishment so generally practised throughout Ireland, and in which the executioner became so expert, that he prided himself in his knowledge of the extent of human suffering; distinguished the precise point when the soul, just winged for its flight to a more peaceful world, might yet be detained, by the suspension of animal torture. Merciful Heaven! what refinement in the science of human suffering! Poor Black had given no offence—he had done no wrong—but his benevolent heart was suspected of sympathising in the miseries of his country.



## CHAPTER XVII.

*Local state of Ulster—Early organization—Subsequent cause of supineness—Yeomanry corps.*

ULSTER, though first in organization, and mature in all her arrangements, had as yet made no movement for the field. The fire of the south was wanting to animate the colder regions of the north; but the spark, though latent, was not extinct.

Ulster had long been regarded by the Irish government with a jealous eye—her moral situation gave a political ascendancy to her decisions, which were usually stamped with a freedom and boldness becoming the importance of her station, and the lettered mind of her independent and wealthy population. To Ulster the other provinces looked with respect: she was the centre of that union which she had so strenuously recommended; and as the early advocate of freedom, and the school of political science, her movements were regarded with more than ordinary concern. But her apparent supineness in the general cause had damped the enthusiasm of those who wished to model their line of action by the parent stock.

The most forward in promoting the union in Ulster had been the first to arrest the attention of an active administration; and the leaders, who from the attachment or confidence of the people were designated by the name, were generally removed from the scene where that attachment or confidence could be most efficiently employed. Many were at this moment inhaling the noxious damps of the dungeon, or crowded in the tender's pestilential hold. Some had found shelter from persecution in foreign ranks; whilst others, "who wanted nerve for the fight," became recreant to the cause, and changed the standard of union for the ensign of power.

The organization of the union in Ulster had been pursued with a minuteness and technicality of system in which the other provinces were somewhat deficient; but that very system proved more injurious to her views, while the want of organization favoured the promptness of action which distinguished the counties less familiar with its forms.

Confidence in her strength had lulled Ulster into security; and that security was followed by supineness, which wasted by degrees her energy and fire.

Men are the children of habit in every country and in every clime, but our inclinations are favourable to indulgence and ease; and though the mind, when roused by particular excitement, considers no enterprise too daring, it becomes languid from inaction, and sinks back imperceptibly to its original inertness. It was even so in Ulster. The aggressions which had first stimulated to resistance became every day more familiar; and the feelings, if not more callous, certainly not more acute. The very confidence which Ulster felt in her powers of resistance taught her to bear those aggressions with firmness; and she waited the combination of events to give a simultaneous movement to the whole population. But while she looked for this excitement in the minds of others, she lost the energies of her own; and with an immense organised force, superior in a military point of view to all the other provinces combined, her efforts were the least efficient, and her arms the most promptly suppressed.

Ulster, properly speaking, might have been designated a military province, the intrenched camp of the Irish volunteers. The immense number of these corps, scattered in every direction over the face of the country, had roused a martial spirit, and familiarised the inhabitants to the use of arms; but this popular force had been suppressed, and government was now actively engaged in forming new levies.

The proud remembrance of the volunteer army of Ulster, associated with the glorious era of 1782, served to render the new corps of yeomanry, who had *assumed* the name of *volunteers*, more unpopular in Ulster than in any other quarter of Ireland. "*Who*," said a political writer of that day, "would attempt to compare the old volunteers with the present yeomen! The paltry services of the old corps were remunerated by disgrace after fourteen years' experience; the present glorious band have not been quite three months in existence, and our virtuous government have expended five hundred thousand pounds of Irish gold upon them!"

In this province particularly the yeomanry corps were in a great measure composed of men distinguished by violent party feeling. The more liberal-minded stood aloof, and a line of separation was formed between those new levies and



the people, which caused a rancorous feeling in the breast of the one, and strengthened the aversion and hostility of the other. The greatest possible exertions were used to induce men to enter into these corps; the favour and protection of government on one hand, their displeasure and resentment on the other; every local influence was resorted to; the magisterial despot, the influential landlord, and the minister of religion were enlisted partisans in the cause. I by no means presume to arraign the motives which induced many worthy members of society to enter this association. Political as well as religious feelings should be respected; it is tyranny to condemn when conscience is the guide. But while I am disposed to concede the due share of merit to those who, in supporting the Camden administration, conceived they supported the prerogative of the crown, I feel no disposition to rank in the same class the man who boasted a loyalty which he never felt, and feigned an attachment to measures which his soul condemned.

When we consider the population of Ulster, the diversity of sects, the influence of party feeling, and the powerful exertions to revive a spirit of bigotry in its inhabitants, it is a subject of reflection that the yeomanry corps were not more numerous; and it is a fact notorious that these corps increased in proportion to the disappointed hopes or the personal fears of the men who had most strenuously opposed their formation. The yeomanry ranks afforded a shelter to the timid, and protection to the man who had not the firmness to abide the fortunes of his country. Those who entered under the impulse of such feelings were generally distinguished by a more than ordinary zeal in the exercise of the duties connected with the service they had embraced, but they never could command the confidence of the party they espoused. They were designated "double traitors," and all their acts were viewed with evident marks of suspicion and distrust. This was not peculiar to Ulster, nor should we press too hardly on those who, in solicitude for the preservation of their families, their properties, or their lives, yielded to fears which, in the weakness of human nature, we have not always the firmness to resist.

At this unhappy period the man who was not quiescent under military outrage, or who had the temerity to express his abhorrence of the system which prevailed, was marked



as a *rebel*, or held in a state of political excommunication more hostile to his personal safety than the dangers of the field. This reign of terror augmented the yeomanry ranks, for those who wanted nerve to bear up against this general proscription sought safety in a service from which their hearts recoiled. These men are more deserving of pity than censure, for in this novel mode of military requisition no latitude was allowed for the exercise of the independent mind; it alike excluded the right of judgment and the prerogative of free will; and he was at once stamped as disaffected, and an enemy to the state, who presumed to question its expediency. There were some, however, who entered from motives of a baser nature; and, after having deserted their former associates, were distinguished by every act of hostility towards them. Where shall we weigh *his* offence, or measure *his* meed of infamy, who, after having encouraged by his influence and example the ardent but thoughtless peasant to resist the strong arm of power, betrayed the confidence of his unsuspecting nature, and shrinking from the cause which he had sworn to maintain, crouched for safety in the ranks which his dastardly soul had not the courage to oppose?

The yeomanry force, though inoperative in a military point of view, was in many cases more formidable than the regular troops. From their knowledge of the country, they served as guides to the army; and, familiar with the passes of the mountain or morass, they sometimes surprised small scattered detachments of the people, whom the regular forces had not the same facility of approaching. They were admirably expert in cutting down the unarmed peasantry, or the stragglers who from fatigue were unable to keep pace with their several divisions. If they were not adepts in a more manly warfare, they were at least familiar with the excesses which the generous soldier deplores, and being acquainted with the political sentiments of their neighbours, they had frequent opportunities of singling out such as they either feared or disliked.\*

To those who are not acquainted with the local situation

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\* From the trial of Woolaghan, and the marked censure of Lord Cornwallis on the president and members of the Court-martial (as in Appendix, No. III.), we may form an idea of the feeling under which some of the yeomanry corps acted at that period.

of Ulster, its population, wealth, and intelligence, it may not be improper to observe, that a considerable portion of that province is distinguished by manners and habits differing widely from those which mark the character of others. The Scotch and English settlers, from the period of Elizabeth to the accession of Queen Anne, though not confined to Ulster, were principally concentrated there, and the native inhabitants, who were either expelled the province or driven to the mountains, remained altogether a distinct and separate people. The line of separation had been carefully drawn, and the policy of England was not to obliterate the mark; and after a lapse of so many years we are still enabled to distinguish the descendants of the settlers of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. But in the expanded system of union, from the year 1795, all distinctions of country and descent were forgotten, and the calculating prudence of the settlers had so far tempered the native warmth of the original inhabitants, that modern Ulster, patient under wrongs, preferred a pacific mode of redress, while one single act of injustice would have roused ancient Ulster to arms, and thousands have bled to revenge a national insult.

The history of Ulster is one of the deepest interest—a mournful lesson of instruction; and the fate of her chiefs a melancholy monument of human greatness. The reign of Elizabeth had consummated the atrocities which her father had commenced, and the cup of Ireland's misery overflowed under the next regal successor, the degenerate and cold-hearted James. The fairest province of Ireland had been despoiled, the noblest blood attainted, and the princely inheritance sequestered to enrich the paramour or favourite of a *virgin* queen; and the inhabitants of that unhappy province, which has been designated the birth-place of heroes and the tomb of the brave, with exile or poverty for their portion, had no intermission of suffering. The barbarity of Essex, the brutality of Cromwell, the perfidy of the first,\* and the cowardice of the second James, though their pretexts were different, all were alike fatal in their consequences.

Amid the misfortunes which it has been the lot of Ireland

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\* James the First stirred up the chiefs of Ulster to oppose the authority of Elizabeth, and after his accession to the British throne rewarded them by the confiscation of their estates; six entire counties were sequestered.

to sustain, Ulster was doomed to the most overwhelming share. Other provinces have been scourged by the lash of oppression, and bent to the earth by the most iniquitous code which the inventive tyranny of man could devise, yet they still retain some monuments of former greatness, whilst to Ulster scarce a vestige remains. O'Nial, O'Donnell, Iveagh, M'Kenna, M'Mahon, Macguire, whose arms once formed a rampart of steel from the Irish sea to the Atlantic, all are sunk in the desolating current, and the only inheritance of their sons is the former fame of their sires. We trace them on the mountain's top, we find them in the sequestered valley below, or we follow them to distant climes, where glory marks their course ; but the pride of the Claneboy, and the lofty soul of Tyrconnell's chief, have long ceased to be objects of jealousy or alarm to Britain ; and even the reflection to the minds of their countrymen is as the last faint ray of a brilliant sun, sunk below our sensible horizon, contending for a moment with the sable cloud of night, then lost to our vision for ever.

If I have dwelt too long on the present or past state of Ulster, it is because every scene connected with my native province is deeply interwoven with the liveliest feelings of my heart, and associated with local attachments of early remembrance, which no time can efface. Those who have been forced from early connexions by the arm of oppression, will feel with me, that power, though it may sever us from the object of regard, can never estrange our affections or obliterate the remembrance of the past.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Effects of an organized system on the population of Ulster—Lowry and Magenis—Their exertions to promote internal tranquility—Barbarous pastimes of the soldiery.*

ULSTER had the command of a powerful force ; her people were impatient for action, waiting orders from their superior officers, but in too high a state of organization to act without them. Two of the most active and influential leaders of the province were at this moment absent—Lowry and Ma-



genis. Whether they are to be considered for their moral worth, their high sense of honour, their inflexible integrity and disinterested patriotism, or the purity of the feelings which influenced the best and noblest of hearts, it has not been the fortune of the writer to encounter through life two men more worthy of public confidence and personal esteem. Early intercourse and similarity of feeling had given birth to a friendship which was cemented by misfortune and only terminated in death. Both had conspicuously contributed to the preservation of the public tranquillity, in allaying the religious animosities which unhappily distracted a great portion of Ulster previous to the general union of Irishmen, and no two men could be better qualified for this truly Christian and charitable undertaking. Magen is was of old and respectable Irish family, the lineal descendant of the ancient lords of Iveagh. The blood of his ancestors ran pure in his veins, and purer never flowed from a generous heart. His influence was powerful, and his exertions unwearied for the public good. Lowry was connected with the most influential Presbyterian families of the north; liberal in mind, engaging in manners, and independent in fortune. The popular character and inestimable qualities of these gentlemen commanded the respect of their countrymen and the admiration of the partisans on either side in this unhappy contest, which, if not suppressed by their humane interposition, must have terminated in the depopulation of the fairest portion of the country.

Unhappily for the tranquillity of Ireland, these religious dissensions were not checked by that authority which possessed the power of controlling them, and the name of religion and the Gospel of peace were the sword and the brand in the infuriate hands of Irishmen, levelled in their mutual strife against the interests of their common country. Ireland was, perhaps, the only portion of the globe where the dissensions of the people were considered the strength of the state, and where these dissensions were encouraged by an alternate balance of power, not less disgraceful to the government than destructive to the prosperity of the country. The contending parties frequently appeared in arms, and under the very eye of the magistracy, and in the immediate vicinity of a regular military force; they always decided their unfortunate contests in blood. To remedy this evil, to dis-

abuse the mind of prejudice, and to promote "Peace on earth and good will to men," the efforts of Lowry and Magenis were unceasing, and eventually successful.

It is not now necessary to inquire into the origin of these disputes, or who were the primary offenders ; it is sufficient that every humane and well-ordered mind deplored them, and if I have been fortunate enough at any period to possess influence with my countrymen, I hope it has never been wanting on these occasions.

As the mutual hostilities of the people declined, and their unhappy dissensions imperceptibly wore away, the intentions of government were more publicly displayed, and the rival parties, hostile no longer, had a new and more formidable foe to contend with ; but the evil policy of the men to whose weak and wicked councils Ireland had been consigned, served only to increase the union of the people, and cement the bond of affection which common interest and common suffering had formed. The face of the country had assumed a new and more cheerful aspect, the dark gloom of religious bigotry was dispelled, industry flourished, and a happy union of sentiment and Christian feeling succeeded the rancorous animosities which had so lately prevailed.

I had an interview with these attached friends previous to their quitting of Ireland. It was difficult of attainment, and the place of meeting interesting, from a combination of circumstances connected with its local situation—it was the field on which the younger Bruce had fallen.\* An unhewn stone of rude mountain granite marks the spot, while it points at the same time to the neighbouring scene of his triumph, where, but two summers before, he had been invested with the Irish crown. Here we contemplated for a moment the rapid transitions of human greatness, and deplored the misfortunes of a country, whose divisions had ever been the bane of her independence.

Before we quitted the field that gave rest to the labours of the adventurous Bruce, the evening had closed imperceptibly upon us, night favoured a circuitous route, which circumstances had rendered necessary for personal safety. A little to our left lay the marshy and unwholesome plain where the army of Schomberg lay encamped on its march

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\* Edward, brother to Robert, king of Scotland.



to the Boyne ; and where, from the humidity of the situation, hardship, and disease, he lost more than four thousand of his men. On the right, inclining a few miles to the west, stood the shattered ruins of Kathleen's castle : we passed it with a feeling of respect, while we gazed on the rugged battlements of the eastern tower, where its fair defender bade defiance to Cromwell's arms, and maintained a gallant siege against the invader of her country.\*

The night favoured our route, while the blazing cottage proclaimed the enemy on the alert ; but this circumstance afforded room to hope that the object of their search had been fortunate enough to elude their pursuit, in which case his cottage was generally burned ; if found in his dwelling, he was grossly abused, or carried to the most convenient military post, where he encountered during the night every species of insult and brutal outrage ; or in the morning was perhaps tied up to the triangles, while the pastime of the soldiery was to count how many stripes the unfortunate victim was able to bear, until, from the nervous convulsion of his frame in the paroxysm of his agony, he made the triangles shake. And the man who resisted this torture was a rebel !

The night passed, and the gray dawn of morning just

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\* The story is too interesting to be omitted, and the more especially, as it has not been the subject of written record, though universally received on national tradition. This venerable castle, the ruins of which now only remain, was considered in the days of Cromwell's invasion a formidable position. Its noble proprietor had marched out to meet the invader of his country, and fell in a desperate conflict with Cromwell's forces. The Lady Kathleen, to whom her husband had committed, during his absence, the defence of the castle, was only apprised of her misfortune by the appearance of the enemy under its walls. With the most heroic courage she prepared for defence, and commanded the garrison to bury themselves in the ruins rather than submit to the merciless Cromwell. They resisted the assault, and defended their post with the firmness of men determined on death. The outworks having been stormed, and part of the castle on fire, the infant heir fell into the hands of the assailants. The brutal Cromwell ordered the child to be affixed to a pike, and held up to the eastern tower, where the Lady Kathleen stood calmly directing the defence. Maternal feeling yielded to what the force of arms were unable to effect, and in an agony of grief she ordered a surrender. The entire garrison, with its heroic and lovely commander, were put to the sword. This distinguished lady was the rich heiress of Colonel George Taafe, whose family long bore the title of Earl of Carlingford.



afforded light sufficient to distinguish objects. A small party of a Highland regiment had been despatched from the little village of D—— to search for arms.\* They stopped at the cabin of a peasant and demanded entrance. Poor Pat had a cow, a rare blessing. He was in the act of cleansing its miserable hovel, with a large three-pronged fork, when he observed the soldiers around his cottage. Irishmen generally act from the first impulse; and the first impulse of Pat's mind at this moment was self-preservation. He darted from the hovel, and, with the long fork in his hand, dashed through the astonished soldiers, heading his course towards a neighbouring bog, bounded by the road over which we passed. The party pursued. Pat had gained an important point. The attention of the enemy was drawn off from his *castle*, and his little family had time to make arrangements for their safety. The pursuit was hot, but the retreat still more vigorous; the incumbrance of brogues was soon laid aside, and Pat, in his native phraseology, gained the bog in a *jiffey*. He was more fleet than his pursuers; but a stout, lengthy, brawny grenadier, as familiar with bog and mountain as the best Irishman in the province, had far outrun his companions, and every moment gaining ground in the pursuit, was just within bayonet reach, when Pat, wheeling rapidly round, charged him with his long three-pronged fork in front. The thrust was a home one, and the Highlander fell. Pat, who in all his varieties of life had never seen the Highland costume before, gazed in surprise on his fallen enemy, addressing him in his native language: "*Though eshin, that augus gu neineg sheighmough yut S' Dioul un daugh viegh urth er maudin um eigh sheigh, augus taught amaugh gou dugh brieshtiegh.*" "Take that, and much good may it do you; you were in a devil of a hurry after me this morning, when you did not wait to put on your breeches."

We now changed our route, which during the night had been directed to the west, and bounded by the smooth deep lake over which rise the ruins of Ferney's ancient castle, gloomy and dark as the deed it records, an imperishable monument of broken faith and outraged hospitality.†

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\* The Highland regiments were distinguished in Ireland for humane and orderly behaviour, strict discipline, and soldier-like conduct.

† In the period of Sir William Fitzwilliam's administration of Ireland, in the reign of Elizabeth, M'Mahon, the Black Baron, chieftain

The morning sun had given a fresh aspect to nature; and, freed from the chilling damps of night, we enjoyed the rich expanded prospect which lay far to the east before us. The fruitful valleys extending to the right, rich in pasture and abounding in corn; the rugged mountains on the left, sheltering the bold and capacious bay, where Irish valour triumphed, and self-immolation gave victory to her naval chief. Far as the eye could discern, bounding the distant horizon on the north, the lofty Slieve Donard, with towering head, seemed to contend with the clouds.

We journeyed, somewhat sorrowful, towards the coast, for the hour of separation drew near. We lingered, unwilling to part, but fate or fortune urged, and the decree was irresistible. Magenis was brave, but his heart was stricken with grief: he had just fled from the horrors of conflagration, of torture, and death; he had but a short period before seen his mansion consumed, and had scarce time to rescue from the flames his young and interesting wife, with their infant child. Proclaimed a rebel, with the price of his political offences on his head, he had no alternative but exile. He bade me an affectionate farewell, struggling to conceal the painful emotions of his soul, and pronouncing in a tone of voice scarcely audible the name of wife and child. I perceived he anticipated that protection which the ties of friendship and consanguinity demanded. Kind, hospitable, and brave, he was the uniform foe of oppression and the friend of distress. The generous heart of Lowry seemed to feel the misfortunes of his friend more than his own; both were equally committed, for neither could view the miseries of his country, and remain an inactive spectator of the scene. We parted with deep regret on either side. A moment, and escape had been impracticable.

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of Ferney, was escorted from Dublin by the Lord Deputy, with a formidable retinue, under pretence of establishing him in the peaceable possession of his extensive estates in Ulster. On the third day after their arrival at Ferney Castle, the unfortunate M'Mahon, having undergone the mockery of a trial by a jury of common soldiers, was executed at his own door, and his estates divided by the Lord Deputy amongst the officers of the escort.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*Antrim and Down—Rising of the United Irishmen in Antrim—Henry Foy M'Cracken, commander—Battle of Antrim—Defeat of the United forces.*

THE two principal counties of Ulster, Antrim and Down, which had previously declared for action, impatient of the restraint imposed by the indecision of their leaders, and ashamed that the first in organization should be the last to take the field, hastened to erect the standard as a rallying point to the province.

The chief command in Down had been early assigned to Russell, and the military organization of this county was considered complete when talent and virtue were combined in the person of its chief. The early days of Russell had been devoted to military pursuits, but the milder lessons of classic science had not been forgotten. Gentle by nature, but lofty in soul, he was enthusiastic in all his attachments; and while he bore personal privations with an heroic firmness, he felt the keenest sensibility for the misfortunes of others. A model of manly beauty, he seemed formed no less *for admiration* than command, and won by the mildness of his manners and the purity of his heart, that marked distinction which was more the spontaneous offering to superior worth than looked for or assumed by the unconscious possessor. His military character had been stamped by the approval of the first captain of the age (the Marquis Cornwallis, with whom he served in India), and his literary taste was an earnest of that refinement which marked the rising genius in "the Athens of Ireland." He was the friend and associate of the classic Drennan, and a similarity of feeling first led to the contemplated establishment of that school of science which justly forms the pride of his adopted town. Such was the man who, in this eventful crisis of his country, had been selected for the chief command in Down. But Russell was now the tenant of the dungeon, incarcerated with other prisoners of state—Emmett, M'Nevin, O'Connor, Sweetman, Jackson, Bond—in fact, a host of Irishmen whose love of country was unconquerable, and whose names are endeared to us by their talents and



misfortunes. Even now, while my hand traces this page, I hear the death of Thomas Addis Emmett announced; the mournful intelligence has been conveyed to his country through the journals of the United States. Full of years and full of virtues he has terminated an eventful but an honourable life; and in his death one of the brightest links that united "the suffering friends of benevolence" has been broken. If sentiments purely disinterested and unambitious ever influenced the breast of man, it was the breast of Emmett. High-minded, generous, and sincere, he was a self-devoted victim for the preservation of others. Unrivalled in talent and unbending in misfortune, he won the admiration of a generous people, who were proud to estimate the qualities of the man whose virtues shed a lustre on the land of his adoption; and while the friends of freedom, in the Old and the New World, shall mourn his loss, the life of Thomas Addis Emmett will be regarded as a model for the patriot of future years.

In the absence of Russell another leader had been appointed—the Rev. William Steele Dickson—a man whose courage, popularity, and bold decision, independent of the better qualities of his mind, fitted him for the important station. He had been the early asserter of Ireland's independence, the eloquent advocate of his Catholic countrymen for the full enjoyment of their civil rights, and had on some occasions to encounter a torrent of bigotry which required no ordinary nerve to resist. Sacrificing personal interest at the shrine of national right, he was refused any participation in the *Regium Donum* which was extended to the several ministers of his Communion in the synod of Ulster; but he preferred poverty with virtue to the allurements of fortune with a compromise of principle.

The talents of Dickson were of too conspicuous a nature to escape the observation of his countrymen; he bore powerful sway with the Presbyterians of Ulster, whose synod was enlightened by the blaze of his eloquence and the gigantic powers of his mind. The following short quotation from his speech in the presence of the volunteer army of Ulster, when commemorating the anniversary of the French revolution, evinces his expanded liberality. On this memorable occasion, the claims of his Catholic countrymen were advocated with a manly boldness on one hand, and opposed

with a specious show of liberality on the other. "The gentleman," said Dickson, "has declared himself the admirer of unqualified freedom in France, while he is the partial and temporising advocate of liberty at home—he would admit his Catholic countrymen *by degrees* to a participation in our civil rights, and extend those blessings *from time to time* which God and nature have decreed the immutable inheritance of man. May I ask what period would he assign for the ultimate emancipation of his countrymen—is it in this century, or is it in the next—is it in this world, or is it in the world to come? Shall a small minority presume to decree whether four millions of their fellow-citizens shall be freemen or slaves? Our Catholic countrymen have only to assert their rights, and they will shake off their fetters with as much ease as the lion scatters the dew from his mane."

Dickson repaired to his post, but was arrested with two of his staff; the others, having been apprised of his misfortune, eluded the vigilance of those into whose hands he had fallen. Down was now without a first in command; the centre of unity was broken, and the more subordinate chiefs were either dispersed, secured, or overawed by the prompt and decisive measures which followed.

Antrim had determined to act in conjunction with Down, and by dividing the attention of the enemy, these countries would have been an overmatch for the British troops which garrisoned both. The period of action had been previously arranged, and the respective duties assigned; but Antrim being prepared for the field, could not be induced to wait the appointment of a new commander for Down. To supply the place of Dickson was not an easy task, nor to restore that confidence to the minds of his countrymen which his arrest had sensibly weakened. Down urged the necessity of delay, but Antrim was resolved—was already committed. Her military chiefs had assembled in council; numbers had quitted their homes for the field; they had bidden an affectionate, and some an eternal adieu to the objects of their tenderest regard. All waited orders from the first in command, when, to their inexpressible astonishment, his formal resignation was announced.

There was now no safety in return, no encouraging hope in advance; the secession of the chief communicated doubt and alarm to others; mutual suspicion and mutual fears were



excited in the breasts of all: the council wavered in their decisions, they ordered and counter-ordered, and eventually retired to deliberate anew. In the meantime, intelligence arrived that the British troops were on their march, and their advanced guard of cavalry within one mile of the seat of deliberation. Flight secured the safety of those who wanted nerve for the field, while in this moment of consternation the attention of the bolder spirits was directed to the man on whose talent and firmness all could rely; this was the gallant M'Cracken, into whose breast no timid counsel ever found entrance. He promptly obeyed the call, and, placed in that situation which had been so recently abandoned, he devoted his life to the hopes and security of his country.

M'Cracken was possessed of all that energy of soul which is the inseparable companion of the noble mind, and marks the character of those, who in the perilous path to freedom must too often sacrifice the softer ties of kindred and domestic attachments; his heart was formed for the enjoyment of these, but embraced the wrongs of the human race.

The British troops were in possession of the town of Antrim. It was a station of some importance, and though unprovided for defensive warfare, its local situation rendered it an object no less desirable to the British than the united forces. Belfast, lying about twelve miles distant, was strongly garrisoned, and the principal military depot in Ulster; while the British camp of Blaris Moore, in a more southerly direction, was nearly equidistant to both. Antrim was surrounded by a rich and populous country; it opened a line of communication to the western district, which in the military arrangements of Ulster was an object of the first attention. A cordial co-operation was expected from the counties of Derry and Donegal, and had they coalesced in the movements of Antrim, and Down maintained its military position, Ulster would have presented a most imposing appearance, from the Atlantic on the west to the Irish Channel on the east.

While Antrim remained in possession of the King's troops, supported by the garrison of Belfast and the camp of Blaris Moore, the united forces had little prospect of making any formidable stand or co-operating with the counties of Derry and Donegal. M'Cracken, whose mind was quick and comprehensive, perceived at once the importance of this



station, and immediately formed the bold resolution of marching on Antrim. As first in command he addressed the following prompt and hasty order to the United troops now assembling in the northern district :—

“ ARMY OF ULSTER—To-morrow we march on Antrim : Drive the garrison of Randalstown before you, and haste to form a junction with the commander-in-chief.

“ HENRY JOY M'CRACKEN.

“ 1st year of Liberty, 6th day of June 1798.”

The first division of M'Cracken's army marched from Cregarogan Fort, one of those ancient fortresses in which the Irish antiquarian seems still in doubt as to the period of their formation. This division was joined by the united troops of Templepatrick and Killead, many of whom, being old volunteers, were familiar with the musket, and not unacquainted with the use of artillery. M'Cracken formed his men into three divisions ; the musketeers in front marched with a firm and steady pace, the pikemen, more numerous, occupied the centre, and two brass field-pieces of six-pound calibre closed the rear ; the most perfect order was observed in their line of march ; their silence was only interrupted by the note of the bugle or the fife, and the more solemn but animating sound of the Marsellois hymn, which, at intervals being sung in chorus, produced an imposing effect, while the lively banners of native green waved from the centre of each division.

M'Cracken halted his men within view of the town ; he harangued them with a feeling well calculated to confirm their confidence and courage ; this was replied to by the universal cry, “ Lead us to liberty or death ! ” Some of the inhabitants having fled from the town, represented in the most touching language the distress which the occupation of it by the British troops had occasioned ; and the blaze of some cabins which had been fired in the outlets but too fully confirmed the report.

On the part of the British troops nothing seemed wanting in their arrangements for defence ; the foot occupied a strong position in front of what is termed the castle-gate, the cavalry were covered by the walls which surrounded the church, and this post was further strengthened by troops

which had just arrived from the camp of Blaris Moore, while the cannon planted near the centre of the town commanded the open and wide extending street between both.

The advance of M'Cracken was bold, and the resistance not less determined; the cavalry were the first to oppose his entrance, and received him with a steady and well-directed fire; but the division of M'Cracken continued to advance, and on the third discharge from the enemy, commenced a fire so galling, that the cavalry were forced to give way. A second division of the United troops had by this time penetrated the town in an opposite direction, and bringing one of their guns to bear on the infantry at the castle-gate, forced their position; the infantry took shelter under the walls, while their cannon raked the assailants, who in close columns were exposed to all its fury in the open street.

A division of pikemen now advanced with the bold determination of carrying the enemy's guns, but were repulsed by repeated discharges of grape-shot, after displaying the most heroic courage and indifference to life; they at length succeeded in gaining the churchyard, where, under cover of their musketry, they had time to rally and form. The well-directed fire from the British cannon dismounted a gun which had enabled the people to maintain their position near the castle-gate; the cavalry seizing the favourable moment made a gallant charge, and were received with no less bravery by a band of pikemen, who defended the dismounted piece of ordnance.

In this action Colonel Lumley, the commander of the cavalry, was wounded. His cool intrepidity and manly conduct throughout the day were the admiration of the contending ranks. Again he charged, when, encountering the phalanx of pikemen who rushed from the churchyard to receive him, his division sustained a most serious loss; many fell, who, coming in contact with the pike, were unable to resist its force or guard against its deadly thrust.

It was now that M'Cracken displayed that bold and daring spirit so conspicuous in the leaders of the Wexford campaign. Following up his success, he pressed on the foe, drove the enemy from their guns, bore down rank after rank in succession, mingling hand to hand with the bravest in the fight. In an hour after his entry he became master



of the town, but a fatal mistake blasted his success, and changed at once the fortune of the day.

The troops from the northern district of Antrim were on their march; they had obeyed the prompt order of the commander-in-chief, and forced the timid garrison, which opposed but feeble resistance. They were within a short distance of the appointed rendezvous, when, meeting a corps of retreating cavalry who had been forced to abandon the town, they mistook their flight for a charge, and under the impression that their division had arrived too late to afford relief or co-operate in the action of the day, they precipitately fled. This circumstance restored confidence to the British troops; they halted, and reinforcements having arrived from Belfast and the camp of Blaris Moore, the fugitive garrison in conjunction with these became the assailants. The transaction was witnessed by a small corps of observation which followed the enemy's retreat to mark their movements; this corps hastened back to the town, and communicating the panic, it rapidly extended to others.

Everything that talent and courage could suggest was attempted on the part of M'Cracken to restore order and reanimate the sinking spirit of his troops in that quarter where the panic most prevailed; but expostulation, encouragement, threat—all were alike disregarded. He seized a pike, and placing himself in the front, menaced with death the man who should dare to flinch from his colours; but terror had now taken possession of the breasts which had lately been fired to the highest excitement of courage, and giving way to the most ungovernable fears, they sought safety in flight, and actually bore down in their confused retreat the man who but a moment before had proudly led them to victory. Their flight was more fatal than the most determined resistance, for encountering a body of cavalry, many were cut down with an unsparing hand, and fell victims to that terror which too often plunges men into the misfortune they seek to avoid.

One division still maintained its position, which from its determined and heroic courage M'Cracken had designated "The Spartan Band." This was commanded by the faithful Hope, a man whose talents were far above his fortunes, and whose fidelity, as well on this occasion as in subsequent calamities of his country, would have honoured the days of



ancient chivalry. On this post a vigorous attack had been made, with the view of effecting a lodgment, which would have commanded an easy entrance to the town. It was assailed and defended with the most obstinate courage, but the assailants were forced to retire. A small detachment of cavalry which had debouched to the left advanced at full gallop, conceiving it to be in possession of the division of which they formed a part. Their alarm was equal to their surprise on finding themselves surrounded: they conceived their destruction inevitable, and awaited their fate in silence, but the generosity of Hope triumphed over every feeling of hostility or revenge:—"Go," said he; "your numbers are too few for the sacrifice—join your comrades, and tell them that the army of the Union feels no triumph in the destruction of the defenceless and the weak." But the fate of the day had been already decided; every effort to rally on the part of M'Cracken was ineffectual; the panic from partial became general, and rout followed.

The brave division of Hope was now obliged to abandon that post which they had so nobly maintained. They made a last effort to uphold the honour of the day: they marched with boldness, and in the face of a victorious enemy they halted. They presented an iron front; they sustained the fire of musketry and cannon, and retired with a reluctant step when resistance was vain, and the last hope of victory had fled. They effected a retreat with order, and planted the tattered ensign of their valour on the heights of Donegore. Here M'Cracken collected such of his scattered forces as had escaped the perils of the day or retained firmness for another trial of arms.

Ballymena, a town of some importance a few miles to the north, was in the possession of the people, and a junction with these was considered desirable, as the only means of retrieving the loss which the recent disasters had occasioned. Thither it was resolved they should march, but it was a difficult task to hold men together after defeat, when privations hourly increased and the ardour of their spirit was broken. M'Cracken took post on the lofty Sleamish, with numbers not exceeding one hundred men. Here, encompassed by a force of four hundred disciplined troops, he prepared to try the fortune of the field, when the British commander, Colonel Clavering, proposed terms of capitula-

tion. These terms were, a full and perfect amnesty on delivering up four of their chiefs, for whom he personally offered a reward of £400. This proposal was spurned by the troops of M'Cracken with proper feelings of indignation. They immediately proclaimed Clavering a rebel, an enemy to the union of Irishmen, and offered £400 for his capture, living or dead.

Whether this *gallant* officer conceived it imprudent to attack men whom circumstances had rendered desperate, or whether, in consideration of the nature and extent of their position affording facilities for a protracted warfare, he was induced to adopt precautionary measures, he certainly did not exhibit a very bold or soldierly line of conduct. M'Cracken continued to occupy the heights, and when no prospect appeared of forcing him from his position, Clavering threatened to fire the surrounding country, in retaliation for the obstinate resistance of a handful of brave and determined men. M'Cracken yielded to the feelings of humanity what the force of his enemy could not have obtained, and he withdrew from the heights, his little band considerably reduced from fatigue and the privations of a mountain campaign. He indulged for a time the hope of penetrating to Wicklow or Kildare, but finding the measure impracticable, he recommended his followers to provide for their personal safety. With seven attached friends he proceeded to the lesser Collon, and baffled by a masterly manœuvre the vigilance of a corps that hung on his retreat but was unable to impede his march. This manœuvre, though simple, evinced the military talent of the leader, and impressed the enemy with the idea that his numbers were more formidable. Favoured by the nature of the ground, they appeared at intervals on different heights, exhibiting at one time the hurried march of men stripped to their shirts, while the clothes of which they had disencumbered themselves being affixed to poles, presented to the enemy in another direction the appearance of an additional force; these were again as quickly removed, and the rapidity of the change, and the velocity of his movements were successful in distracting the enemy's attention, who, fearing to press too closely on him, remained at a secure distance, while he carried off his little band in safety in the presence of a yeomanry force of fifty men. But the hour of his destiny was at hand: his movements were closely watched,



and his friends too few to make any successful effort to support him—he fell into the hands of the enemy. On the scaffold he evinced the firmness which he displayed in the field, and his martial courage was only surpassed by the superior virtues of his soul.

Few had better opportunities than myself of estimating the qualities of M'Cracken. He was my fellow-prisoner for twelve months, and often the companion of my cell. Lively, generous, and sincere, I met no man who bore privations with greater firmness. A short sketch has been drawn by one of his companions in arms who survived the fatal catastrophe. "I saw him," said he, "as he marched for the field; his loose-flowing locks were confined by the helm which shaded the arch of his manly brow, while his eye beamed with the fire which animated his soul, pure as the breeze from his native mountain, and generous as the floods which fertilize the valleys. The damps of the dungeon had rendered pallid his cheek and less robust his form, but the vigour of his mind was uninjured by the tyranny of the oppressor. I saw him in the blaze of his conquest—I saw him in the chill of defeat. I witnessed his splendour in arms, and the pride of his soul in distress. Circumstances unavoidably separated us. A little time,—and he was the tenant of the tomb!"

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## CHAPTER XX.

*Assembling of the United Troops in Down—Action near Saintfield—Attack on Portajerry—Battle of Ballynahinch—Total Suppression of the United Irishmen in Ulster.*

THE disasters which followed the rising in Antrim had not the effect of intimidating Down, but a fatality attended their separate movements. Had they acted in concert, a different result might have been produced. The other counties of the province, though apparently tranquil, were far from composed, and had they risen simultaneously, the whole British force in Ulster would not have been able to suppress them. Antrim and Down alone could have produced more men for the field than the government of



Lord Camden might have found it prudent to contend with.

The decisive battle of Antrim was fought on the 7th of June, and though M 'Cracken had been able to maintain a fugitive warfare with a few brave and determined followers, the spirit of the country was broken, and no exertion of his was successful in restoring it.

The United Irishmen of Down first appeared in arms on the 9th, in the neighbourhood of Saintfield, but before any formidable number had assembled, they were forced into action. The town of Newtownards, a few miles distant, was garrisoned by an English regiment, the York Fencibles; these, under the command of Colonel Stapleton, together with a corps of yeoman cavalry, another of infantry, and two light pieces of cannon, marched with haste to dislodge them. Informed of Colonel Stapleton's advance, the people posted themselves in the line of his march, a short distance from the town of Saintfield, occupying the space between high and close hedges, which, then in full verdure, shadowed the road on each side over which he must pass. Here they awaited Stapleton's approach, and here they must have succeeded in cutting off his entire division, had it not been for the temerity of an individual, who, observing in the yeomanry ranks a gentleman conspicuous for *loyalty*, the Rev. Mr. Mortimer, rector of Comber, levelled his musket and fired—Mortimer fell.

This shot was the first intimation to Stapleton of his perilous situation; about one half of his force were already within the line of the hedges, when he discovered the position of the United troops, and the action instantly commenced. Such of the British as were within the hedges suffered severely; many fell before any effectual resistance could be made. Captain Unit, of the York, at the head of the light company, at length succeeded forcing one of the hedges; he was received on the opposite side by a body of pikemen, and fell gallantly fighting at the head of his company, most of whom perished with him.

The action now became more general. Such of the British troops as had not entered the defile, were able to form; they were assailed with much intrepidity by the people, but eventually succeeded in beating them off, at least so far as to enable Colonel Stapleton to effect an orderly retreat to

Comber. This little affair, though indecisive, was sanguinary; no prisoners were taken on either side. Stapleton occupied Comber for the night, while the United troops entered Saintfield, and remained in the undisputed possession of the town.

On Sunday, the 10th, it was understood that the men of Ards had taken up arms; they were regarded as a prudent, but a bold and determined people; Stapleton marched from Comber to oppose them. The distance was short: a little time would have brought the parties into contact, but Stapleton changed his route and proceeded towards Belfast.

While the inhabitants of the northern division of the barony of Ards were assembling, those of the southern had marched at an early hour in the morning against Portaferry. Captain Mathews, a brave and experienced veteran, had the command of that town, and displayed considerable talent in its defence. The only force he had for its protection was one on which, as a military man, he seemed to place but little reliance. This was the yeomanry; but Mathews was determined they should fight; he inclosed them in the market-house, and directing the captain of a revenue cruiser, then lying in the river, to bring his guns to bear on the street, he waited the approach of the people, who were now advancing on the town in considerable force.

The yeomanry had no alternative—fight they must; the guns from the cruiser commanding the open street were alike pointed against those who advanced or those who might be disposed to fly—the pikemen in an opposite direction—the market-house between. Self-preservation forced a sort of courage—Mathews cheered his *forlorn hope*—a number of pikemen fell by the first discharge—the Ards men advanced—again they received a volley from the fortress. The shot from the cruiser by this time began to tell; men dropped in every direction, ignorant of the force by which they were assailed; their exposed situation in the street, with the pressure in the rear, soon caused confusion in the front, and unable to return the fire with proportionate effect, they retreated from the town.

Mathews, satisfied with the result of the action, but not considering it prudent to risk a second, passed over to Strangford with his yeomen, who had calculated so little on their own powers of resistance, that some actually conceived, for the moment, that they themselves were the runaways.



The rising in the northern parts of Down had now become pretty general. On the morning of the 10th a considerable body of men, chiefly armed with pikes, entered Newtown Ards ; they were repulsed, but returning in the course of the day with additional numbers, and a few pieces of small ship cannon, they took quiet possession of the town, which had been previously evacuated by the slender garrison that had successfully opposed them in the morning. From Newtown Ards they proceeded to the mountain of Scrabo, and thence marched in the night for Saintfield.

Saintfield was now the general rendezvous of the United troops, and on the morning of the 11th presented an aggregate force of nearly 7000 men. No chief had been appointed to the command of Down since the arrest of Dickson ; at this moment Monroe arrived, and presenting himself to the assembled forces, was unanimously elected their commander.

Monroe was a man of much spirit and enterprise ; he had from his boyhood been a member of the Irish volunteers, and possessed a considerable portion of military talent, heightened by a romantic and almost chivalrous courage. Rather under the middle stature, he was peculiarly well formed, remarkably expert in all the manly exercises where vigour and activity are combined, and just at that period of life when the frame has acquired the full nerve of manhood, alike distant from the softness of youth or the inflexibility of age. Few men were better fitted for the active duties of the field ; but those qualifications so desirable in a leader were more than counterbalanced by a romantic love of glory and a mistaken feeling of honour, which impelled him to reject more temperate counsels when opposed to that thirst of fame which formed the leading passion of his breast.

The arrangements of Monroe discovered a military genius which presaged the most favourable results, and confirmed the confidence of those who had selected him for the command. He despatched a force on the 11th, under the command of Townshend, a brave and confidential officer, to take possession of Ballynahinch. The small garrison fled on Townshend's approach, having first hanged two of the inhabitants whom they had previously retained as prisoners.

Monroe continued to occupy, during this day, the commanding heights around Saintfield, posting a strong force on



Creevy Rocks, to oppose the march of the enemy, should they be inclined to interrupt his line of operations. On Tuesday, the 12th, he marched for Ballynahinch, the rear of his army covered by the division on Creevy Rocks. He now learned that the British troops, under the command of General Nugent, supported by General Barber of the royal artillery, had marched from Belfast to attack him, and proceeded to make the best arrangements for defence which the nature of his ground admitted.

Nugent's line of march, as it drew near to Ballynahinch, lay by the side of a steep hill, on the summit of which was a windmill. The ground on each side of the road was divided into small fields, and, from the acclivity of the situation, the fences rose one above the other, forming a kind of amphitheatre. Here Monroe posted some of his best musketeers ambuscaded behind the fences, assigning this important post to M'Cance, an officer who displayed throughout the action the most steady and determined courage. He then drew up the main body of his army on the bold and commanding hill of Ednevady, which rises to a considerable height, about a quarter of a mile in a south-westerly direction from the town; while the Windmill station, occupied by M'Cance, was nearly equidistant from the latter in a north-easterly position.

Thus posted, Monroe waited the approach of the British army, which was presently announced by a rising blaze; for as far as the eye could discern, they had fired the country throughout their line of march. Monroe vigilantly watched their movements, and in order the more effectually to ensure the success of the ambushade on the Windmill-hill, he despatched a force to an adjoining eminence, which he naturally concluded would engage the attention of the British commander, while it might serve at the same time to check the advance of a division on its march from Downpatrick to co-operate with the troops from Belfast. This division soon appeared, and succeeded in forming a junction with the army of General Nugent. On a preconcerted signal being made (the discharge of two pieces of artillery), they hastened across the fields, and avoided the detachment which Monroe had placed to intercept them.

By this time the British general had advanced within range of the United division posted on the eminence, and

hastened to dislodge it, when M'Cance opened a fire from his ambuscade, and with such spirit and effect that the whole British line was interrupted in its advance and kept in check for more than an hour, with a considerable loss of men, while his little band sustained no serious injury. The division which had been the first object of General Nugent's attention, having suffered from the shot and shells of the royal artillery, retreated, and succeeded in gaining the summit of the Windmillhill. This was an important, and to the British an annoying post. Several attempts were made by them to carry it; but from its advantageous position and the well-directed fire, many of the British troops evinced an unwillingness to approach it; and in one regiment in particular the utmost exertions of the officers were necessary to induce the men to advance.

The army of Nugent now formed between the hill and the town, presenting a front and directing their fire on both. Monroe was totally defective in cannon: a few ship-guns of small calibre were all he could command, and these were of little service opposed to the British artillery under General Barber, an efficient and experienced officer.

In this posture of affairs Monroe considered it prudent to withdraw his men from the Windmill-hill; and unable to resist the fire from the British cannon that played upon the town, he abandoned the idea of defending it, and resolved on concentrating his entire force on Ednevady, preparatory to a general attack on the British line. He sent orders to M'Cance to retire from the post which he had defended with so much courage and ability, while Townshend received instructions to evacuate Ballynahinch, some of the houses of which had now taken fire from the discharge of the shells. M'Cance refused to obey the first and second order, earnestly soliciting a reinforcement from the commander-in-chief; but on the arrival of the third messenger with more positive orders, he quitted his post with reluctance and an agitation of mind which he was unable to conceal.

A British regiment now advanced to occupy the post which had been just abandoned. On this occasion one of those extraordinary acts of enthusiasm was evinced, often discernible in the Irish peasant character. On retiring from the hill, the division left two of its number behind. One had actually refused to quit his post; the other had for some



days previously encountered great bodily fatigue. He had fought at Saintfield on the 9th, was incessant in every pursuit connected with the duties assigned him, but exhausted with toil and unable to follow his division, he extended himself on the ground and sunk into a profound sleep. The former, on the advance of the enemy up the hill, still maintained his position, and, being an excellent marksman, continued to fire with effect; when, having discharged his last round, he bounded over the fences and gained his division in safety. The latter was only roused from his stupor by the hurried pressure of feet over his prostrate body. When it was discovered that life was not extinct, he was ordered for immediate execution. "I came here to die," he observed with the greatest possible composure; "and whether on Ednevady or the Windmill-hill, it can make little difference." He was suspended to one of the arms of the windmill, and his body in that situation exposed for the remainder of the evening and the following day.

Monroe having drawn in his several posts and formed his line for action, offered battle to the British troops; but the evening being far advanced, they contented themselves with throwing shot and shells on the hill with little intermission and little effect. In the course of the night, having entered the town, much disorder prevailed, and chiefly amongst the yeomanry corps; a numerous body of these had marched under Nugent's command, and, giving loose to pillage and excess, brutal intoxication consequently followed. Men and horses were promiscuously scattered through the streets; houses fired in several directions; a general relaxation of discipline prevailed, or rather all discipline was sunk in licentiousness.

The United troops rested on their arms. It was a night of deep interest and awful suspense. Monroe, ever on the alert, passed from rank to rank, cheering, encouraging, and relieving the wants of his companions.

A friendly messenger from the town presented himself at the outposts, and was conveyed to head-quarters. He represented the disorganised state of the enemy,—their unguarded situation,—and suggested the propriety of an immediate attack. A council of war was assembled,—the voice of the people declared for *instant* action; the commander-in-chief alone opposed it. The discussion was warm



and animated,—the best spirit prevailed amongst the troops,—the proudest feelings had been roused by the bold exertions of the day, and those feelings had not yet subsided. The ammunition was insufficient for to-morrow, but ammunition was not wanting for a night-attack, for the pike and the bayonet were more efficient. To-morrow might reinforce the enemy's ranks,—to-night everything favoured an attack, while fortune seemed to have placed an easy victory within their reach.

Such were the arguments advanced; but the mind of Monroe was not to be changed—his resolution had been formed, and remained immovable. "We scorn," said he, "to avail ourselves of the ungenerous advantage which night affords;—we will meet them in the blush of open day,—we will fight them like men; not under the cloud of night, but the first rays of to-morrow's sun." This determination was received with discontent by the troops, and many retired from the field. A division of nearly seven hundred men, and more generally armed with muskets than the rest, marched off in one body with their leader. Such was the romantic character of the man in whose hand was placed the destiny of thousands.

On the morning of the 13th, at the first dawn, Monroe formed his men for action; and though their numbers had been sensibly diminished during the night, they betrayed no want of courage or confidence in their commander. He commenced the attack by a discharge from eight small pieces of ship cannon, which were drawn up against the town, and, under all circumstances, well served; these were promptly replied to by the heavy artillery of the enemy. A strong division marched from the hill, with the view of penetrating the town on the right; while Monroe headed in person a more formidable column, directing his march to the left. General Nugent despatched a body of troops to contend the ground with the former, who waited their approach drawn up in a solid square, and received them with a destructive fire, which checked their advance; but the officer commanding the British troops having fallen, his men gave way and hastily retreated into the town.

The column led by Monroe consisted of the greater part of the disposable force which remained, and no men could have displayed greater courage and enthusiasm than they

evinced in the advance. They bore down all opposition ; forced an entrance into the town, under the most destructive fire of musketry and cannon, repeated rounds of grape-shot sweeping whole ranks, which were as rapidly replaced. A piece of heavy artillery fell into the hands of the pikemen, who charged to the very muzzle of the guns.

Monroe gained the centre of the town, where, exposed to a cross fire of musketry in the market square, raked by the artillery, his ammunition exhausted, he pressed boldly on the enemy with the bayonet and the pike ; the charge was irresistible, and the British general ordered a retreat. Here followed one of the most extraordinary scenes, unexampled perhaps in ancient or modern warfare. The United troops, unacquainted with the trumpet's note, and enveloped by the smoke, which prevented a distinct view of the hurried movements in the British line, mistook the sounded retreat for the signal of charge, and shrinking, as they conceived, from the advance of fresh numbers, fled with precipitation in a southerly direction from the town, while the British were as rapidly evacuating it on the north.

This unfortunate circumstance led to the total defeat of the United army. A British regiment of cavalry, the 22d Light Dragoons, who had borne no active part in the operations of the day, charged the flying troops of Monroe, while the infantry, recovering from their panic, joined in the pursuit. Monroe, whose courage and resolution never deserted him, endeavoured to rally his men, and gained the hill of Ednevady, his former position. Here he halted, formed, and presented his feeble line to the enemy, who were now encompassing the hill in all directions ; one point only remained unoccupied, where the extending base, too wide to be encircled, afforded an opening for retreat. Through this Monroe, now abandoned by fortune, led off the last division, scarcely mustering a hundred and fifty men. Numbers fell in the retreat. The British never gave quarter, which accounts for the circumstance that few or no prisoners were made.

Amongst those who perished on this occasion was a young and interesting female, whose fate has been so feelingly recorded in the poetic strains of our distinguished countrywoman, Miss Balfour. Many were the romantic occurrences of a similar nature at this unfortunate period,



but none, perhaps, more deserving of our sympathy than the interesting subject of the present incident. The men of Ards were distinguished for their courage and discipline, and their division bore a full share in the disasters of the day. In this division were two young men remarkable for their early attachment and continued friendship. They were amongst the first to take up arms, and from that moment had never been separated. They fought side by side, cheering, defending, and encouraging each other, as if the success of the field solely depended on their exertions. Monroe had assigned on the 12th a separate command to each, but they entreated to be permitted to conquer or perish together. One had an only sister; she was the pride of a widowed mother, the loved and admired of their village, where to this hour the perfection of female beauty is described as it approximates in resemblance to the fair Elizabeth Grey. She had seen her brother and his friend march to the field; she had bidden the one adieu with the fond affection of a sister, but a feeling more tender watched for the safety of the other. Every hour's absence rendered separation more painful; every moment created additional suspense. She resolved to follow her brother—her lover—to the field. The fatal morn of the 13th had not yet dawned when she reached Ednevady heights. The troops of the Union were in motion. She joined the embattled ranks. The enthusiasm of love supported her through the perils of the fight, but borne down in the retreat, she fell in the indiscriminate slaughter, while her brother and her lover perished by her side.

The town of Ballynahinch was pillaged and fired. So intent were the British troops on plunder that many fugitives escaped the slaughter to which they must otherwise have fallen victims. Subsequent courts-martial, however, afforded an ample scope for the indulgence of the sanguinary passions. The brave Monroe was one of their first victims. Two days after the battle his place of concealment was discovered; his person was soon identified; nothing further was wanting. He knew the fate that awaited him. With a quick but a firm step and undaunted composure he ascended the scaffold, evidently more desirous to meet death than to avoid it. He was executed in the thirty-first year of his age, at the front of his own house, where his wife, his mother, and sister



resided. His head was severed from his body, and exhibited upon the market-house on a pike, so situated as to be the first and the last object daily before the eyes of his desolate family.

Immediate dispersion followed the defeat of the United forces at Ballynahinch, after which no further attempt was made to raise the standard in Ulster. But a cessation of hostilities produced no cessation of suffering. Every breeze wafted over fresh troops from England; every tide bore new-raised levies from her shores—regiment followed regiment in succession, until Ireland presented the appearance of one vast encampment. Commerce, manufactures, and husbandry were suspended, while the country seemed to have exchanged a rural for a military population. Vast numbers of the people were hourly dragged to prison or hurried before military tribunals, when the angry passions left little room in the human breast for the exercise of justice or mercy. To shelter a friend in misfortune, or to sympathise in his sufferings, was to participate in his offence.\* The people were called on to surrender their arms and deliver up their leaders, and threatened with military vengeance for non-compliance. The surrender of arms was sometimes made as a peace-offering, but it was vain to propose to the people to deliver up their leaders: such proposals were uniformly received with that feeling of indignation which an act of treachery never fails to excite in the Irish breast. The reply of M'Cracken's little band to the offers of Clavering expresses the confidence and attachment that existed between the leaders and the people. I knew a brave and a noble-minded man in the humble walks of life—and his sentiments were the general sentiments of the people—who, when

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\* The proclamations of the British colonel, Derham, to the inhabitants of Belfast are descriptive of the military despotism of the period:

“ . . . And shall it be found hereafter that said traitor has been concealed by any person or persons, or by the knowledge or connivance of any person or persons of this town and its neighbourhood, or that they or any of them have known the place of his concealment and shall not have given notice thereof to the commandant of this town, such person's house will be *burnt*, and the owner thereof *hanged*.”

“ This is to give notice, that if any person is taken up by the patrols after ten o'clock, he will be fined five shillings, for the benefit of the poor. If the delinquent is not able to pay five shillings, he will be brought to a drum-head court-martial, and will receive *one hundred lashes* !

JAMES DERHAM, *Colonel-Commandant*.”

pressed to give information against a gentleman proscribed by the Government, with an assurance of protection and reward on the one hand, and an increase of torture for non-compliance on the other, extending his arms, which were heavily manacled, and exhibiting the irons which had deeply corroded the flesh, "I will wear these," said he, "until they shall penetrate to the marrow of the bone, before I become a *traitor*."

The movements of Ulster had been regarded by the Irish Government with a fearful anxiety, and their suppression was an object of the deepest importance: it enabled them to direct their attention to the south, and to the west, where they had a new and unlooked-for enemy shortly to encounter. The subjugation of Ulster may therefore be considered as decisive for the adoption of that measure which was wrung from Ireland in the hour of her distress, and could never have been accomplished but through the distractions of the country. Had the Government withheld the torch, the gibbet, and the scourge, Ireland would not have witnessed the horrors of a civil contest, and the number of brave men who perished on each side would have added to the strength and the security of the realm.

## APPENDIX.

## No. I.

## ORIGINAL DECLARATION OF THE UNITED IRISHMEN.

IN the present great era of reform, when unjust governments are falling in every quarter of Europe ; when religious persecution is compelled to abjure her tyranny over conscience ; when the rights of man are ascertained in theory, and that theory substantiated by practice ; when antiquity can no longer defend absurd and oppressive forms against the common sense and common interests of mankind ; when all government is acknowledged to originate from the people, and to be so far only obligatory as it protects their rights and promotes their welfare ; we think it our duty, as Irishmen, to come forward and state what we feel to be our heavy grievance, and what we know to be its effectual remedy.

*We have no National Government*—we are ruled by Englishmen, and the servants of Englishmen, whose object is the interest of another country, whose instrument is corruption, and whose strength is the weakness of Ireland ; and these men have the whole of the power and patronage of the country as means to seduce and to subdue the honesty and the spirit of her representatives in the legislature. Such an extrinsic power, acting with uniform force, in a direction too frequently opposite to the true line of our obvious interests, can be resisted with effect solely by *unanimity, decision, and spirit in the people*—qualities which may be exerted most legally, constitutionally, and efficaciously, by that great measure essential to the prosperity and freedom of Ireland—*an equal representation of all the people in Parliament.*

We do not here mention as grievances the rejection of a place-bill, of a pension-bill, of a responsibility-bill, the sale of peerages in one house, the corruption publicly avowed in



the other, nor the notorious infamy of borough traffic between both. Not that we are insensible to their enormity, but that we consider them as but symptoms of that mortal disease which corrodes the vitals of our constitution, and leaves to the people, in their own government, but the shadow of a name.

Impressed with these sentiments, we have agreed to form an association, to be called "*The Society of United Irishmen;*" and we do pledge ourselves to our country, and mutually to each other, that we will steadily support, and endeavour by all due means to carry into effect, the following resolutions:—

First,—Resolved, that the weight of English influence in the government of this country is so great as to require a cordial union among *all the people of Ireland*, to maintain that balance which is essential to the preservation of our liberties and the extension of our commerce.

Second,—That the sole constitutional mode by which this influence can be opposed is by a complete and radical reform of the representation of the people in Parliament.

Third,—That no reform is practicable, efficacious, or just, which shall not include *Irishmen of every religious persuasion*.

Satisfied as we are that the intestine divisions among Irishmen have too often given encouragement and impunity to profligate, audacious, and corrupt administrations in measures which, but for these divisions, they durst not have attempted, we submit our resolutions to the nation as the basis of our political faith.

We have gone to what we conceive to be the root of the evil; we have stated what we conceive to be the remedy. With a Parliament thus reformed, everything is easy; without it, nothing can be done. And we do call on and most earnestly exhort our countrymen in general to follow our example, and to form similar societies in every quarter of the kingdom for the promotion of constitutional knowledge, the abolition of bigotry in religion and politics, and the equal distribution of the rights of men through all sects and denominations of Irishmen. The people, when thus collected, will feel their own weight, and secure that power which theory has already admitted to be their portion, and to which, if they be not aroused by their present provocations to vindicate it, they deserve to forfeit their pretensions *for ever!*

## No. II.

AT a Meeting of the NORTHERN WHIG CLUB, held at BELFAST on the 16th of April, 1790, GAWIN HAMILTON, Esq., in the Chair, the following Resolutions and Address were agreed to :—

Resolved unanimously—That when an unmasked and shameless system of ministerial corruption manifests an intention to sap the spirit, virtue, and independence of Parliament, it is time for the people to look to themselves.

Resolved unanimously—That if the people have a due regard to their essential rights and interests, if they reflect that the arch of constitution was cemented with the blood of their ancestors, or consider themselves trustees for millions unborn, they will steadily oppose so ruinous and execrable a system. If they do not, instead of glorying in that independence which they so lately with efficacy vindicated, they must soon sink into the most ignominious slavery.

Resolved unanimously—That our respectful address to the electors of Ireland, together with these resolutions, the toasts of the day, and a list of the members of this club, be published.

## TO THE ELECTORS OF IRELAND.

The third estate of Parliament no longer exists. The power of regenerating it reverts to you ; and never was a wise, a faithful, a *spirited* use of that power more loudly called for. The corrupt support given in the late session, by placed and pensioned majorities, without pretension to argument, decency, or ability, to an administration equally destitute of them all, in measures avowedly hostile to the rights, liberties, and prosperity of this country, proclaims your danger, points out your defence, and challenges your best exertions. In the name of your country, then, we call upon you to support the rights of Ireland, to exert the important privileges of freemen at the ensuing election, and to proclaim to the world that you deserve to be free. Guard your share in the legislature as the great distinction between our constitution and a tyranny. Preserve it equally from the inroads of the crown and of the aristocracy.

Where a representative has proved faithful, renew the



trust; where he has bartered his duty for emoluments, either for himself or for his retainers, reject him with disdain; and amongst new candidates support those and those only whose characters place them above suspicion, and give a just ground for confidence.

Regard not the threats of landlords and their agents when they require you to fail in your duty to your country, to yourselves, and to your posterity.

The first privilege of man is the right of judging for himself, and now is the time for you to exert that right.

Let no individual neglect his duty. The nation is an aggregate of individuals, and the strength of the whole is composed of the exertions of each part; the man, therefore, who omits what is in his power, because he has not *more* in it, stands accountable for confirming and entailing slavery on the land which gave him birth. As an upright House of Commons is *all* that is wanting, do your duty to your country by endeavouring to create one; and let no consideration tempt you to sacrifice the public to a private tie—the greater duty to the less.

We entreat you, in the name of your insulted nation; we implore you by every social and honourable tie; we conjure you as citizens, as freemen, as *Irishmen*, to exclude from the representative body that herd of slaves who have dared to barter your dearest rights and most essential interests for their private gain. The illustrious minority of the last session have acquitted themselves in a manner seldom equalled. It remains for you to do your duty to yourselves. If you are not satisfied with a House of Commons in which the voice of the nation is with difficulty to be heard—with a majority of that house returned with rotten boroughs, and filled, through ministerial profligacy, with 104 pensioned hirelings—if you do not wish to countenance corruption—if you desire to guard the treasure of the public from the rapacity of English viceroys—if you do not wish the fountain of nobility contaminated by the sale of the honours of one house for the purpose of bribing the other, and to see a police-ruffian stand sentinel at every man's door in the land, you will propose the following questions by deputations of electors, and on the very hustings, to every gentleman who offers himself for the trust of representing you in Parliament; and you will not hesitate to reject the claim of any man,



however great his rank or extensive his connections, who shall not unequivocally pledge himself to support the following salutary and necessary measures :—

“Will you regularly attend your duty in Parliament, and be governed by the instructions of your constituents? Will you, in and out of the house, with all your ability and influence, promote the success of a bill for amending the representation of the people? A bill for preventing pensioners from sitting in Parliament, or such placemen as cannot sit in the British House of Commons? A bill for limiting the number of placemen and pensioners, and the amount of pensions? A bill for preventing revenue officers from voting or interfering at elections? A bill for rendering the servants of the crown of Ireland responsible for the expenditure of the public money? A bill to protect the personal safety of the subject against arbitrary and excessive bail, and against the stretching of the power of attachment beyond the limits of the constitution? And will you, as far as in you lies, prevent any renewal of the Police act?”

Those who shall for a moment hesitate to enter into such an agreement with their electors cannot be faithful servants of the public, nor deserve the countenance of an honest man.

Resolved unanimously, that we will not vote for nor support any candidate who shall not solemnly and publicly pledge himself to the measures recommended to the electors of Ireland in the preceding Address.

Signed (by order) GAWIN HAMILTON, President.  
A. HALIDAY, Secretary.

The following are a few of the names of the original members of the Northern Whig Club :

Lord CHARLEMONT.  
Lord DE CLIFFORD.  
Lord MOIRA.  
ARCHIBALD HAMILTON ROWAN.  
Hon. ROBERT STEWART (Lord  
CASTLEREAGH).  
WILLIAM TODD JONES.  
Hon. E. WARD.  
Hon. R. WARD.  
Hon. H. ROWLEY.

Right Hon. JOHN O'NIELL  
(Lord O'NIELL).  
Right. Hon. H. L. ROWLEY.  
ELDRED POTTINGER.  
WILLIAM BROWNLOW.  
SAVAGE HALL.  
WILLIAM SHARMAN.  
JOHN FORBES.  
RICHARD J. KER.  
E. J. AGNEW.

The following were among the toasts of the day :—“President Washington, and the United States of America ;” “A happy establishment to the Gallic Constitution ;” “Freedom to the Brabanter ;” “Our Sovereign Lord, the People.”

## No. III.

THE TRIAL OF HUGH WOLLAGHAN FOR THE MURDER OF  
THOMAS DOGHERTY.

PROCEEDINGS of a GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL held in the  
Barracks of DUBLIN, on SATURDAY, October 13, 1798,  
by order of Lieut.-Gen. CRAIG.

Colonel EARL of ENNISKILLEN, PRESIDENT.

Major BROWN, R.I.D.

Captain IRWIN, R.I.D.

Captain ONGE, R.I.D.

Captain CARTER, R.I.D.

Captain LESLIE, Fermanagh.

Lieutenant SUMMERS, 68th.

JOSEPH ATKINSON, ESQ. D.J. ADVOCATE.

The court being met and duly sworn. proceeded to the trial of Hugh Wollaghan, of Middleton, in the county of Wicklow, yeoman, charged with having, on the first of October inst.,\* come to the house of Thomas Dogherty, and did then and there shoot and kill the said Thomas Dogherty, to which he was encouraged by Charles Fox and James Fox of the aforesaid county, yeomen; and the said James Fox is likewise charged with having discharged a loaded gun at Margaret Barry, of Delgany, on the first of October inst. The prisoner being duly arraigned, pleaded "Not guilty."

MARY DOGHERTY, of Delgany, in the county of Wicklow, sworn.

Q. Do you know the prisoner at the bar?—A. I do:

The witness deposed, that on Monday week the prisoner, Hugh Wollaghan, came into her house at Delgany, and demanded if there were any bloody rebels there; that on deponent's answering there was not—only a sick boy—the prisoner Wollaghan asked the boy if he was Dogherty's eldest son; upon which the boy stood up and told him he was Wollaghan then said, "Well, you dog, if you are, you die here;" that the boy replied, "I hope not; if you have anything against me, bring me to Mr. Latouche, and give me a fair trial, and if you get anything against me, give me the severity of the law;" that Wollaghan replied, "No, you dog, I don't care for Latouche, you are to die here," upon which the deponent said to Wollaghan (he then having the gun cocked in his hand), "For the love of God, spare my

---

\* A period *subsequent* to the cessation of hostilities.



child's life, and take mine ;" that Wollaghan replied, " No, you bloody w——, if I had your husband here, I would give him the same death." He then snapped the gun, but it did not go off ; he snapped it a second time, but it did not go off ; upon which a man of the name of Charles Fox, but not either of the prisoners at the bar, came in and said, " Damn your gun, there's no good in it ;" and that the said Fox at the same time said to Wollaghan, that that man (pointing to deponent's son) must be shot ; that deponent then got hold of Wollaghan's gun, and endeavoured to turn it from her son, upon which the gun went off, grazed her son's body, and shot him in the arm ; the boy staggered—leaned on a form—turned up his eyes, and said, " Mother, pray for me." That on Wollaghan's firing the gun, he went out at the door, and in a short time returned in again, and said, " Is not the dog dead yet?" the deponent replied, " Oh yes, Sir, he is dead enough ;" upon which Wollaghan replied (firing the gun at him again), " For fear he is not, let him take this." Deponent was at that instant holding up her son's head, when he fell—and died.

Q. Who was in the house at this time?—A. Esther Dogherty, sister to the deceased, was in the house when the first shot was fired, and then went away ; another sister, Mary Dogherty, was in the house when Wollaghan first came in, but left it before the gun was fired by him. The prisoner James Fox, the elder, was outside the door with a gun, but took no act or part, as far as I could see, in the business ; the prisoner James Fox I have nothing to allege against.

CROSS-EXAMINED.—*Prisoner to witness.*—Were not your husband and other son concerned in the rebellion?—A. I can't tell.

Q. Don't you believe your son was killed at Dunboyne, fighting the King's forces?—A. He was not ; he is now alive and working at his trade.

Q. Don't you believe your deceased son was a rebel, and engaged in the battle of Dunboyne against the King's forces?—A. I do not ; he has been accused of it.

Q. Did you ever hear that deceased was taken prisoner as a rebel?—A. He was taken as a rebel, as I suppose, and was afterwards put on board a ship lying in the river, where he was sick, and was got off by Lord Cornwallis's orders, through Mrs. Latouche, and put into the navy hospital.



*Q.* Do you recollect seeing this paper before (shewing the witness a manuscript song)?—*A.* I never did, to the best of my knowledge.

*Q.* Where is your husband, and how long has he been from home?—*A.* He is now in Dublin, working at his trade of brogue-making, but he was reaping at home, at Delgany, a month before this.

*Q.* When did you last see your son, whom you now say is living?—*A.* Three months ago, at Newtown Park, working at his trade of brogue-making.

*Q.* Did you ever hear of any quarrel or dispute between your son and the prisoner Wollaghan?—*A.* I never did.

Esther Dogherty, sister to the deceased, being examined as to the same points as her mother, gave similar evidence.

Margaret Barry being called upon and duly sworn, informed the court that she had nothing to say against James Fox or any of the prisoners at the bar.

The prosecution being closed, and the prisoner Hugh Wollaghan being called to his defence, called on Richard Byrne, a private in the Wallace Fencibles, who was duly sworn.

*Prisoner to Byrne.*—Did you know the deceased Thomas Dogherty, his father, and brother?—*A.* I did.

*Q.* Have you any and what reason to think they were rebels, and did you see any of them exercise as such? *A.* Yes, I have seen them exercise with poles or pikes at Mr. Johnson's fields at Killencarrig, four miles beyond Bray, in the beginning of last spring.

*Q.* Did any, and which of them, apply to you to join them as rebels?—*A.* Thomas Dogherty, the man that is dead, asked me why I was not in among the body? "What body?" said I; upon which he said, "I'll leave you as you are."

*Q.* Where did you find this paper—*A.* This paper came out of the pocket of Dogherty's mother; in the churchyard at Delgany, the day on which the coroner's inquest sat on the body of her deceased son, I picked it up, conceiving it to be a bank-note; but finding there was no stamp on it, I shewed it to a friend, as I can't read myself, and he told me it was a damned good thing; and the first time I saw Captain Gore, who commands the Newtown Mount-Kennedy yeomanry, I gave it to him.

*Q.* When did you give it to him?—*A.* That day.

*Q.* Where do you live?—*A.* This month past at the

rendezvous in Kevin Street, where I have been since I enlisted, except the time I went to Delgany.

*Q.* Where did you live before?—*A.* At Killencarrig, as a servant to a widow, and I was there near ten months.

*Q.* How far is Killencarrig from Delgany?—*A.* About half a mile.

Captain Gore was called and sworn, who deposed that he got the paper alluded to from the witness Byrne.

E. WEYMAN, Private, Newtown-Mount-Kennedy Yeomanry, sworn.

*Prisoner to Weyman.*—Did you know the Doghertys, and were any, and which of them, reputed rebels?—*A.* I did, and the three were reputed as such.

*Q.* Did the mother of deceased give you any furniture to keep? and what expressions did she make use of on that occasion?—*A.* She did; she sent her daughter to me just after the Ancient Britons had been at Delgany, and requested that she might leave some leather and other articles in a sack at my house, which I consented to, and she sent them accordingly, and I kept them a month after the action at Mount-Kennedy; she offered them to me for sale, and when I pointed out the mischief that arose from the rebellion, she, with her hands lifted up, cursed the authors of it, and said that it brought ruin on herself and family, and that she had not seen her husband and sons for some time back. This conversation took place about the beginning of June.

The prisoner requested the indulgence of the court-martial until Monday to proceed with his defence, and the court accordingly adjourned.

*Monday, October 15th.*—The court met pursuant to adjournment.

THOMAS VICARS, Esq., sworn.

*Prisoner.*—Do you know, and by what means Thomas Dogherty was liberated and returned to the county of Wicklow, and for what was he confined?—*A.* I understood that he had been taken in arms against the king's forces in the county of Westmeath, was tried by a court-martial of the Carlow militia, and was sent to one of the guard-ships in the river Liffey to be transported; but by the intervention of Mrs. Latouche to Mrs. Cooke and General Cradock, was liberated.

*Q.* Do you know if Dogherty had any protection, and from whom?—*A.* I dont know that he had, nor did I ever hear of his having one.

*Q.* Do you know if he took the oath of allegiance after he was liberated?—*A.* I don't know that he ever did.

*Court.*—Do you know if he had been guilty of any act of rebellion since his release?—*A.* I don't know of any.

ISAAC SUTTON, of Rathdum, county of Wicklow, sworn.

*Prisoner.*—Did you know the late Thomas Dogherty?—

*A.* I did; I was taken prisoner by the rebels near Roundwood, in the county of Wicklow, about the month of May last, and he was one of the guard over me, for I heard his name called Thomas Dogherty, and he answered to the name, and that he was a brogue-maker at Delgany.

*Q.* Did you know Dogherty before you were taken prisoner; did you see him since you got away from the rebels?—*A.* No.

*Q.* How do you know that it is the same Thomas Dogherty that was shot?—*A.* It struck me that it was the same when I heard of his death, but I don't know that it is the same.

GEORGE KENNEDY, Corporal of Mount-Kennedy Yeomen, sworn.

*Prisoner.*—Do you know Captain Armstrong; in what district did he command; and do you know of any general orders, and when were they given?—*A.* I do know Captain Armstrong of the King's County Militia, who commanded at Mount-Kennedy before and after Dogherty was shot. In consequence of the enormities and murders committed in that neighbourhood by day and night, the general orders given by him were, that any body of yeomanry going out, he would wish them not less than nine or ten for their own safety; and if they should meet with any *rebels* whom they knew, *or suspected to be such*, that they need not be at the trouble of bringing them in, but to *shoot them on the spot*. This order was before Dogherty was killed. The witness communicated this to the corps, and is very certain in the hearing of the prisoner Wollaghan.

*Q.* Do you know of any party of your corps being ordered out on 1st October last for the purpose you mention, and by whose orders did they go out that day?—*A.* I don't recollect anything about it, as I was confined to my bed on that day.

*Q.* Do you know me; what is my general character as to sobriety and regularity in the corps?—*A.* I have known you upwards of nine months in the corps, and I have known you during that time to be a sober, faithful, and *loyal* yeoman, and not degrading the rest of the corps; one of the best in it.



*Q.* Was it not the practice of the corps to go out on scouring parties, without orders, to protect their own property and that of their neighbours?—*A.* I always looked upon it as an order and practice of the corps, particularly after what Captain Armstrong had mentioned.

*Q.* Would you yourself, from his character and the orders you received, have thought yourself justified to shoot him?—*A.* Yes; I certainly would.

*Q.* In any parties you have been with the prisoner did you ever see him commit any act of cruelty or show any inclination to it?—*A.* No; I never saw him do anything but what was his duty.

Serjeant HAYES, of Newtown Mount-Kennedy Yeomen, sworn,

Deposed that he knew the prisoner four months in the corps, and that he always behaved as a sober, *loyal*, brave man, and good subject.

*Prisoner.*—Do you know of any general orders issued to the corps; and by whom?—*A.* I do; Captain Armstrong, of the King's County Militia, said in my hearing, that he would *shoot or hang any rebels whom he suspected*, and told the people under his command to do the same—this order was issued before Thomas Dogherty's death, and I should consider myself authorized to do so, under that order.

Lieut. WILLIAM TOMLINSON, of the Rathdum Yeomen Cavalry, sworn.

*Prisoner.*—What were the orders issued to your corps, and those in your vicinity, respecting the rebels?—*A.* It was generally understood that orders were given to the corps not to bring in prisoners, but to shoot any that were known to be rebels.

*Q.* Do you recollect when these orders were understood to have come out, and by whom they were issued?—*A.* I do not know who they came from, but they came out after the attack at Arklow.

Lieutenant ANDERIV, of Newtown Mount-Kennedy Yeomen, sworn,

And deposed that he has known the prisoner particularly upwards of ten years, that he is a good *loyal* subject, and ready at all hours to do his duty, and that he never knew him cruel; on the contrary, never saw him act inhumanly. That since the death of Dogherty he attended parade until apprehended for this charge.

## APPENDIX.

Captain ARCHER, of same Corps, sworn,

Deposed he knew the prisoner since he was a child, and that he worked for him in his profession—a mason, and always found him a sober and diligent man, and since his being a yeoman ready to obey his officers, and looked on him to be an acquisition to his corps.

Lieutenant RICHARD GORE, same Corps, sworn,

Who deposed that he has known the prisoner since the attack at Newtown; he was always obedient to his officers, and rather leaned to the side of mercy than not. Part of the corps marched against the rebels, and the prisoner particularly showed his promptitude, zeal, and courage on that occasion.

Captain GORE, sworn,

Deposed that he has known the prisoner about four months, and that he was one of the attendants on his duty as a yeoman, and that he knew him to be a *loyal* and brave soldier, and never knew him to be guilty of any act of inhumanity; and that it was the practice of the corps to scour the country without an officer; and verily believes they understood it was their duty *to shoot any rebels* they met with, or *suspected to be such*; and deponent has heard that other corps had similar directions in other districts.

Defence closed, and the prisoner's counsel read an address to the Court for the prisoner. The prisoner was acquitted.

DUBLIN CASTLE, 18th October, 1798.

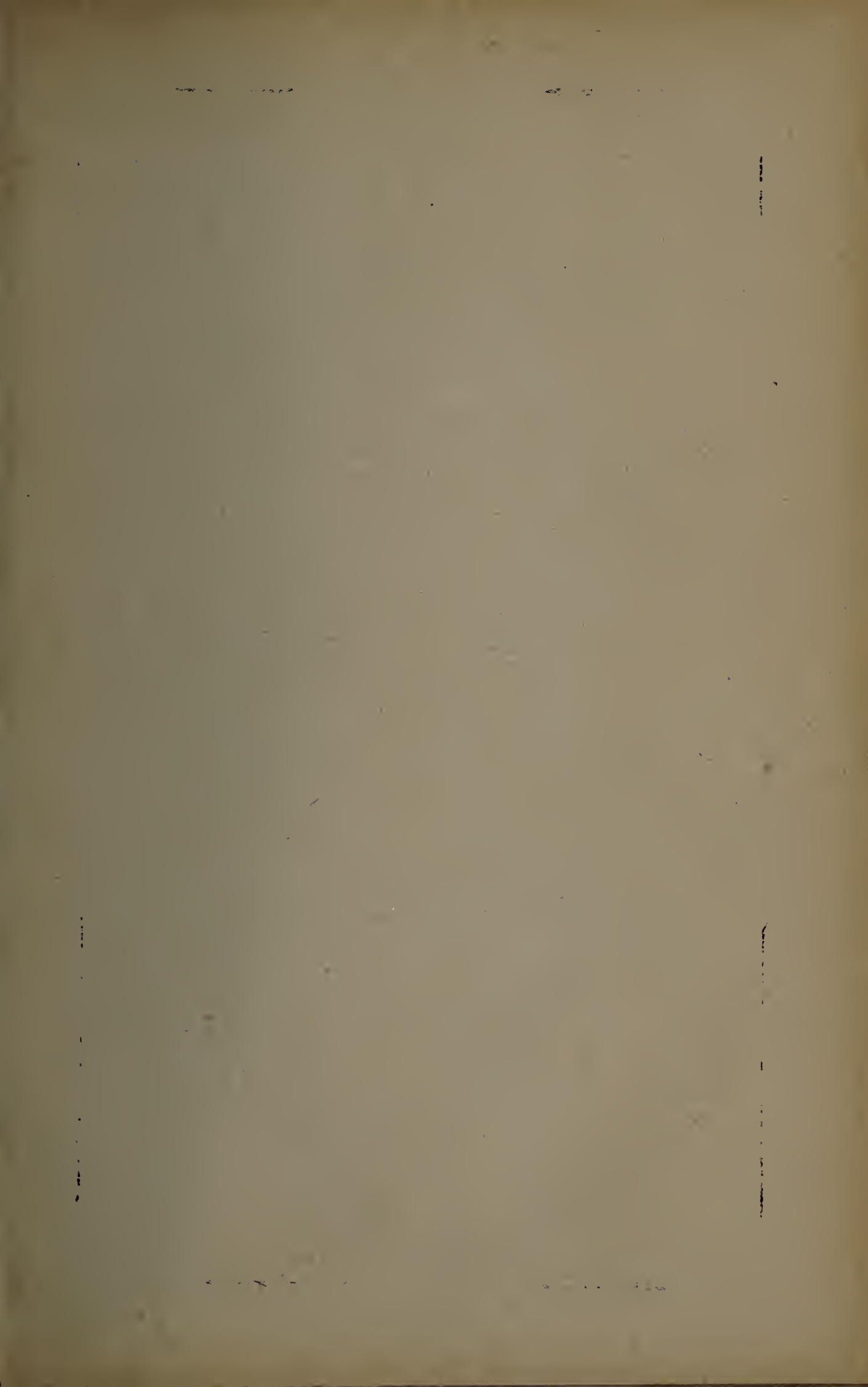
SIR,—Having laid before the Lord-Lieutenant the proceedings of a general court-martial, held by your orders in Dublin barracks, on Saturday the 13th inst., of which Colonel the Earl of Enniskillen is president, I am directed to acquaint you that his Excellency entirely disapproves of the sentence of the above court-martial acquitting Hugh Wolloghan of a cruel and deliberate murder, of which, by the clearest evidence, he appears to have been guilty.

Lord Cornwallis orders the court-martial to be immediately dissolved, and directs that Hugh Wolloghan shall be dismissed from the corps of yeomanry in which he served; and that he shall not be received into any other corps of yeomanry in this kingdom. His Excellency further desires that the above may be read to the President and members of the court-martial in open court.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

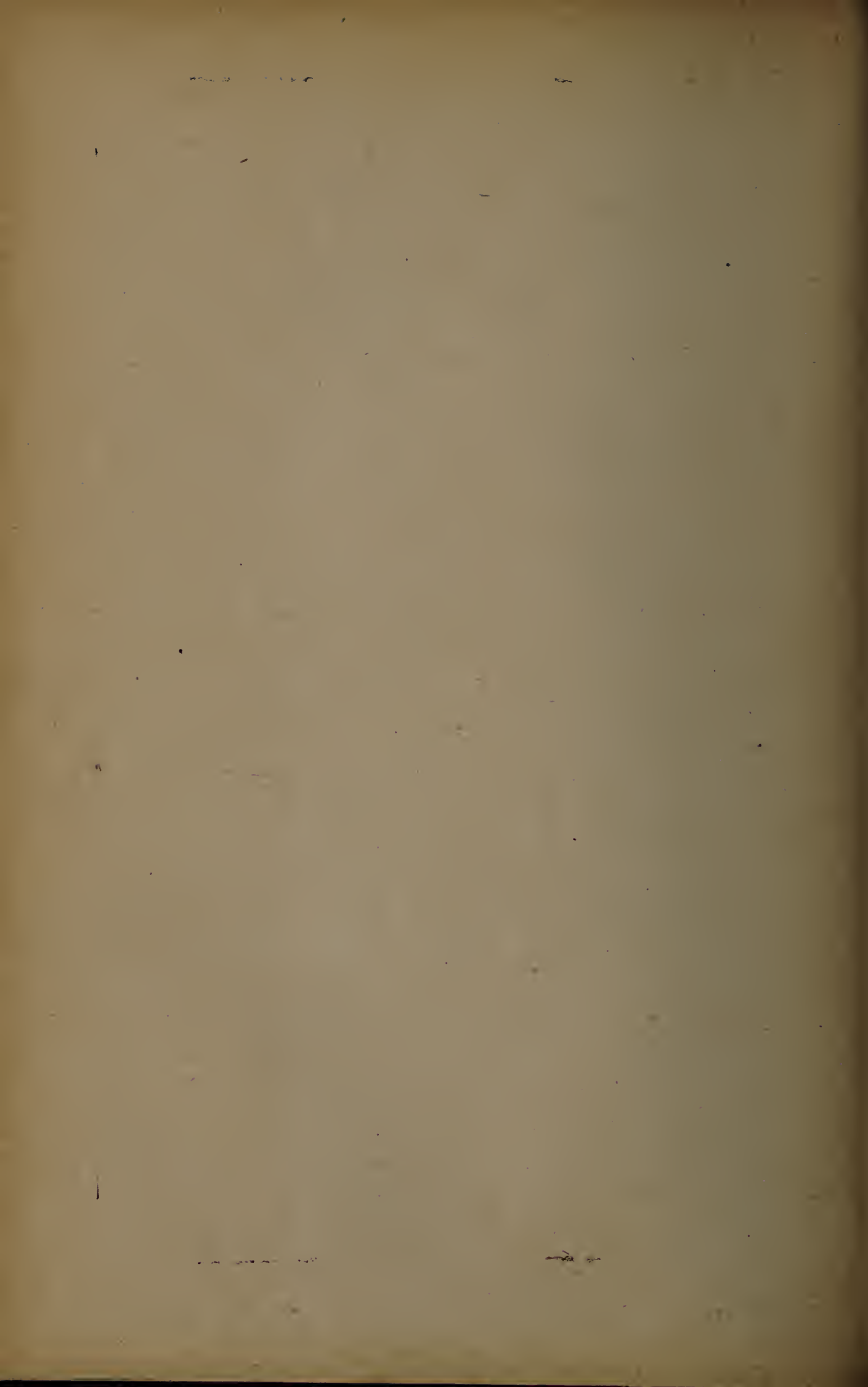
H. TAYLOR, Sec.

To Lieutenant-General CRAIG, etc.

P.S.—I am also directed to desire that a new court-martial may be immediately convened for the trial of such prisoners as may be brought before them, and that none of the officers who sat upon Hugh Wolloghan be admitted as members.







SEQUEL  
TO  
THE HISTORY  
OF THE  
IRISH REBELLION  
OF 1798:

*A PERSONAL NARRATIVE.*

BY  
CHARLES HAMILTON TEELING.

“REBELLION! foul dishonouring word,  
Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained  
The holiest cause that tongue or sword  
Of mortal ever lost or gained—  
How many a spirit born to bless,  
Has sunk beneath that withering name,  
Whom but a day's—an hour's success,  
Had wafted to eternal fame.”

MOORE

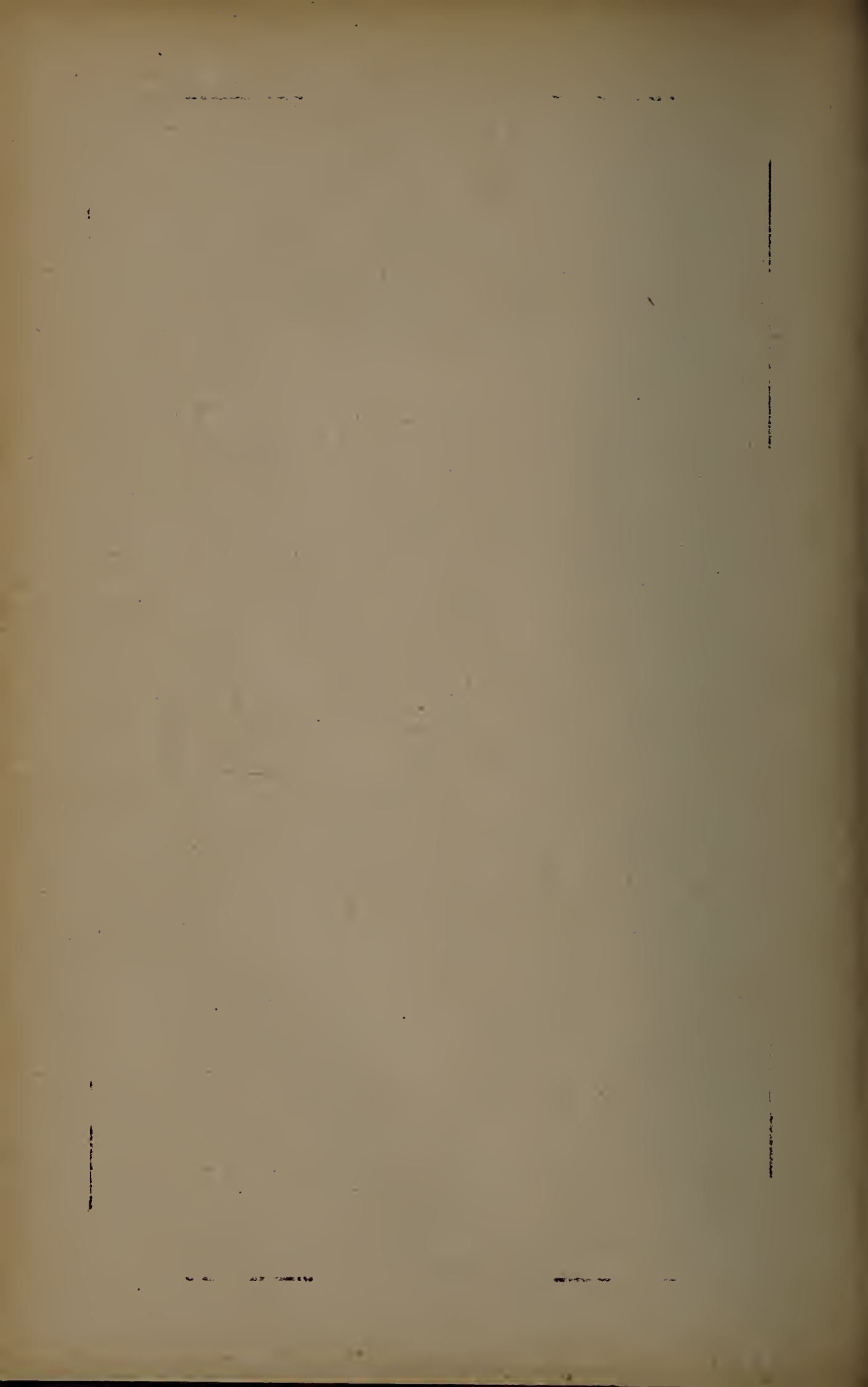
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# CONTENTS.

---

	Page
INTRODUCTION ... ..	161

## CHAPTER I.

Formation and Progress of the Alliance between the Irish Union and the Government of France .....	185
--	-----

## CHAPTER II.

Consequences of the Victory of the Royal Army at Ballynahinch— Situation of Ulster at that eventful period.....	198
--	-----

## CHAPTER III.

Proscriptions—Anecdotes illustrative of the Native Generosity of the Irish Peasant—Mountain Scenes—Venality of the Press— Military Devastations—Ingenious Devices of the Peasantry for the Protection of their Families.....	210
---	-----

## CHAPTER IV.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald—Irish Militia.....	230
---	-----

## CHAPTER V.

Cavalry Defeat on Kilcullen Green—Treaty with General Dundas—  
 Massacre on the Curragh of Kildare—Battle of New Ross—  
 Massacre of Scullabogue—Proclamation from the United  
 Army—Manifesto of the British General commanding in the  
 Southern District—Arrangement of Forces—Battle of Arklow 235

## CHAPTER VI.

Augmentation of the British Army in Wexford—Deplorable situa-  
 tion of the Country—March of United Forces to Wicklow—  
 General Lake—General Byrne—Lacken Hill Encampment—  
 Masterly Retreat to the Three Rocks—Advance and concentra-  
 tion of the Royal Troops—Yeomanry and Military Devastations  
 —Massacre of Prisoners in Wexford—Battle of Foulks' Mill—  
 of Enniscorthy—of Vinegar Hill..... 251

## CHAPTER VII.

Retreat of the United Forces to the Three Rocks—Lord Kings-  
 borough—Town of Wexford—Negotiations—Surrender—Em-  
 bassy to General Lake—Advance of the British Army—March  
 of the United Forces to the North—to the West—Military  
 Movements—Castlecomer attacked and burned—Dispersion of  
 the Western Division of the Wexford Army—Progress of the  
 Northern Division..... 262

## CHAPTER VIII.

Retreat of the Residue of the Wexford Forces to Kildare—Arrange-  
 ments for new enterprise—Advance to the North of Leinster—  
 Conflicts with the British Troops—Battle of Knightstown—  
 Retreat to the Boyne—Defeat of the Wexford Northern  
 Division..... 275

## CHAPTER IX.

Courts-Martial—Execution of Wexford Leaders—State of the Country after the Cessation of Hostilities—Amnesty violated—Exemplary conduct of British Officers—Conditions between Generals Dundas and Alymer—Final Dispersion of the United Forces in Kildare .....	283
---	-----

## CHAPTER X.

Amnesty Bill—Courts-Martial and Executions.....	290
---	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

Treason of Reynolds—Arrest of the Leinster Delegates—Special Commission—State Trials—Henry and John Sheares—M'Cann—Byrne and Bond—Negotiations with Government.....	295
---	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

Landing of the French under General Humbert—Capture of Killalla and Ballina—Battle of Castlebar and Defeat of General Lake—Battle of Colooney—Rapid Progress of Humbert—Arrival of Lord Cornwallis and Concentration of the British Forces—Battle of Ballynamuck and Surrender of the French—Recapture of Killalla, etc.—Departure of Humbert and his Army as Prisoners of War—Detention of Teeling and Tone...	300
---	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

Trial and Execution of Bartholomew Teeling .....	314
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIV.

Sufferings of the State Prisoners—Luke Teeling.....	322
---	-----



## CHAPTER XV.

Page

French Expedition from Brest under General Hardy—Dispersion of the Flotilla at Lough Swilly—Defeat and Capture of the <i>Hoche, Loire, etc.</i> — Death of Theobald Wolfe Tone— Conclusion.. ..	336
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APPENDIX—William Orr—Sir Edward Crosbie, Bart.—Henry and John Sheares—Negotiation between Government and State Prisoners—Arthur O'Connor's Letter to Lord Castlereagh.....	343
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## INTRODUCTION.

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VERY powerful motives induced me, upon a late occasion, to lay before the public a narration of some events connected with an important era in the History of Ireland. These were to rescue the memory of the fallen from misrepresentation, and to convey a lesson for the future by retracing the scenes of the past.

The transactions of the period to which I referred have not ceased to be matter of deep interest to the English reader ; and my statements attracted the notice of many of the London periodicals. Of these, personally, I do not complain. My own motives for embracing the desperate fortunes of my country were not arraigned. My unaltered attachment to a cause in which I had suffered was not censured, neither was the justice of that cause denied—the verdict of the world has pronounced it “Holy.” But doubts were cast upon the authenticity of a *subdued* detail of those atrocities which drove Irishmen, who at first had united to procure a reform of government abuses, subsequently to resist the exercise of intolerable oppression, and finally to unfurl the standard of revolt.

I am constrained to advert to this subject. In order to disabuse the minds of those who conceive “that the wrongs of Ireland were exaggerated, or had they been of the extent and enormity represented, a mild and beneficent Monarch would have interposed between the crimes of his Ministers and the sufferings of his people.” I shall adduce such authorities as even the most fastidious must consider conclusive.

## TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

*The humble Petition of the Governor, Magistrates, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County of Kildare.\**

SIRE,—Debarred by the rash and presumptuous threat of military force, denounced by your Majesty's minister in this country, from the exercise of our ancient and undoubted right of meeting to petition the King ; a right so dear to the subject, so useful to the Sovereign, as to be asserted and confirmed at the period of that revolution which settled in your Majesty's family the crown of these realms ; undismayed by the ill success of our last approach to your Majesty's throne, when, on the departure of Earl Fitzwilliam from the government of this country, we stated to your Majesty, that we foresaw the return of a system of rapine, disunion, and contempt of the people, and expressed to your Majesty our fears of its consequences—WE, the undersigned Magistrates, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the county of Kildare, impelled by the awful appearance of public affairs, by a sense of the highest and truest affection for your Majesty's person and illustrious house, of attachment for the mixed forms of our constitution, of regard for ourselves, our children, our posterity—we venture once more to approach that throne. With zeal, but with respect—with warmth, but with temper—with freedom, but allegiance, we will state our manifold grievances. To entreat justice is to ask redress.

Information, ripened into knowledge, has taught that unanimity will correct abuses, and Ireland can no longer lie supine under the heap which ages have accumulated. Of these, the most flagitious are resorted to, as precedents of Government, by your ministers here. To you, Sire, the common father of our people, in contradistinction from those who carry on your Government, we fly for redress. . . .

Sire, in support of your Majesty's crown, of your dignity, of our laws, and of our constitution, united Ireland wished to deserve and to earn its freedom, and with your present ministers the crime of Ireland is, that it is united ;—yes, Sire, the men of Ireland are united, not by oaths, but in a common cause, and by a common interest,—not in a wish, much less an attempt, to establish, as imputed, a Republic—but in a determination to uphold and to correct the mixed forms of our constitution ; not

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\* This petition bore six thousand signatures. Amongst the subscribers were men of the first rank and fortune in the country ; and, in the language of the day, of unquestionable loyalty. The petition was *delivered into the hand of his Majesty*, at St. James's, by Lord Henry Fitzgerald.



in open rebellion to your Majesty, but in abhorrence of your ministers, and in a temperate resistance to measures which destroy, and abuses which corrupt, all that is valuable in that constitution. Yes, Sire, we are united to impeach, at the foot of your Majesty's throne, the advisers and abettors of the present system of governing this country. . . . We are united to impeach those ministers for an indefatigable perseverance in a system of irritation, which has been the parent of all those disorders which unfortunately do exist, and which we lament with more real sincerity than those who, spurning the yet untried means of conciliation, wish, and have expressed it, to resort to the sword. Yes, we are united to state to your Majesty that your Majesty's Catholic subjects have experienced, in the northern parts of this kingdom, a persecution unparalleled, and at which humanity shudders, though it could never induce the apathy of your ministers to inquire, or to redress. . . . When the law, ill administered, yielded no safety, men resorted to a bond of Union; the persecutors and the persecuted, ashamed of the outrages committed by both, have united to obtain Reform and Emancipation, in order to cure the vices of that system of disunion from which their division sprang—to which both were eventually to be a prey. If their views, Sire, go beyond the avowed purposes of Reform and Emancipation, we are not with them; but with them we consider those concessions as necessary to the salvation of the State. We wish to interfere between an administration which has driven the people to those measures, and the evil consequences which would follow a misdirection of their physical force. Yes, Sire, we are united to state that the utmost contempt for your people, for their lives, and for their rights, seems to be the only fixed principle of conduct in the minds of your Majesty's ministers here. For four years they have waged a war of law against justice—of statute against right—of persecution against opinion.

To the ignorance in your Majesty's English Ministers of the dispositions and feelings of the inhabitants of this country much mischief must be imputed. They are misinformed and deluded if they think, that to an administration which has alienated the Protestant, disgusted the Catholic, enraged the Dissenter—to a junto of delegated clerks, coupled with desperate adventurers in politics in this country—Ireland will yield a constitution and an independence, which by zeal in the cause of the empire, and temperate steadiness in the support of national rights, our Volunteers deserved from your Majesty, and wrested from the grasp of the British Parliament. Sire, we value our connection with England as it secures—we should scorn it if it infringed on—our national independence.

We entreat that your Majesty will maintain and uphold it, by the dismissal of your present ministers from your councils for

ever, and by seriously recommending to your Parliament the claims of your people to Reform and Emancipation. We adjure your Majesty to prevent the rashness of those men who seem to provoke a contest, which, after immense effusion of English and Irish blood, might terminate in an alienation of affection and a separation of empire; or, in its utmost success, could only leave your Majesty to reign over a despoiled country, and an ill-conquered people.

Frustrate, Sire, we supplicate you, the views of the wicked, whether they lead to anarchy or to despotism. May your Majesty's parental care restore to us peace abroad, to ease our burdens and vivify our commerce, but the far more exalted benefit of peace at home; and by wise and timely attention to our grievances, prevent, by *Reform*, the evils of *Revolution*.

This petition is not confined to the representation of ills of a "partial" nature, nor does it speak the language of disaffection—but of deep interest for the honour of the crown, the rights of the people, and the tranquillity of the state. It is not the petition of men desirous to subvert the throne, or regardless of the tie that should bind the monarch and the subject. It is a temperate appeal from the tyranny of Ministers to the justice of the crown. It bares their crimes to the sovereign's view. It accuses them, and justly accuses them, of treason against the people—and it warns his Majesty to beware of the evil counsels of men, whose unconstitutional measures were hastening his empire to ruin.\*

The following extracts, which I quote from the debates in the English Lords and Commons, will be perused with interest by every friend to civil liberty and social order. They exhibit, on the one hand, the generous but unavailing efforts of those illustrious statesmen who laboured to arrest the advance of Ministers in their sanguinary career, and

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\* "Let us look to Ireland—when I speak of that country, I know not in what terms of reprobation to express my abhorrence of the system which Ministers have pursued. . . . 'We earnestly solicit his Majesty, by dismissing his present servants, to give to the people of Ireland, the strongest proof they can receive of his Majesty's disapprobation of that system of *treachery* by which the present discontents of that country have been fostered; and of his Majesty's intention of securing (if it is yet possible) the connexion that subsists between these kingdoms, by extending, to men of all descriptions, in that oppressed country, the blessings of the Constitution under which they were born.'"—*Duke of Bedford's Address for the Admission of Ministers, 30th May 1797.*



to rescue Ireland from the ills which their mischievous counsels were hourly augmenting. They present, on the other, a melancholy illustration of the deep planned conspiracy against Ireland's independence; and how far the hallowed name of liberty may be abused, and rendered subservient to the worst views of despotism.

In their revolting system of hypocrisy and oppression, the independence of the Irish legislature was the uniform defence set up by Ministers, for the acquiescence of the crown in the violation of the rights of the subject; while the most unconstitutional measures were exercised, with a shameless effrontery, under the fallacious pretext of veneration for constitutional privileges.\* We behold, for the first time, the British Cabinet evince the most profound respect for the independence of the Irish Parliament—the most scrupulous regard to its rights—the most repugnant feeling to any interference with its prerogative, and this at the very period when a majority of the same “Independent Parliament” were the venal tools of a despotic ministry.† In this appalling drama, where the symbol of liberty was made the watch-word of oppression, and the prerogative of the crown to minister to the miseries of the people, the Irish legislature played its part, not less conspicuous for its base venality than disgusting subservience to all the tyrannical measures of an unprincipled Cabinet. Its exterminating enactments, written in the blood of our countrymen, and registered amongst the foulest deeds of national atrocity, present an imperishable monument of legislative corruption.

Should after ages decipher in the mouldering records of the past, the execrated names of our country's foes, they will trace, in the unfading register of Ireland's friends—even in the land of her oppressors—those which were dear to her liberties and the rights of the human race. It were injustice

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\* Our friends in England have a right of saying to their Sovereign, “Sire, your Ministers are degrading the common Constitution of Ireland—they are enslaving the people, debauching the Parliament, and driving the country to madness.”—*Mr. Curran in the Irish House of Commons.*

† “The ministry that sold the Irish Peerage to buy the Irish Commons—the ministry that laid out half-a-million to procure a majority in the Irish Commons—that ministry that procured a code of coercion, by which civil liberty is suspended, and afterwards exceeded that code of coercion, and went fairly and openly to sword work.”—*Ibid.*



to the memory of these distinguished statesmen not to record their magnanimous efforts for the redress of Ireland's wrongs, and it were no less injustice towards Ireland to forego a testimony so honourable to her cause.

On the 21st of March, 1797, the Earl of Moira brought forward his promised motion on the State of Ireland—"That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, imploring his Majesty's paternal and beneficent intervention, to remedy the discontents which unhappily prevailed in his Majesty's kingdom of Ireland, and which seriously threaten the dearest interests of the British Empire." In adverting to the situation of "two separate and independent legislatures, acting each, within its own sphere, for the happiness of the two countries—united under a common head, and indented by a common interest," Lord Moira deprecated any interference with the rights and privileges of either. "This was no question," he said, "of internal regulation—it was a point of common concern and of mutual interest, upon which both countries had an equal right to stand forward."

"The extent and rapid increase of the discontents which prevailed in Ireland, were subjects of sufficient notoriety to form the ground of this proceeding. He should abstain, therefore, from enumerating the particulars which had come to his knowledge, and of which, indeed, he had recently been witness. . . . In addressing his Majesty to the effect proposed, the house would not only exercise one of its important privileges, but fulfil one of its most important duties. If it appeared that his Majesty's Ministers had not given that advice which was calculated to insure the happiness and prosperity of Ireland, it was the duty of their lordships to approach the throne with advice more wise and salutary. He attributed the distracted state of Ireland to the impolitic removal of Lord Fitzwilliam; and if the British Cabinet could interfere so successfully for what he deemed an impolitic and mischievous purpose, could they not interfere for the salutary end of recommending wisdom, and producing good? It was by temper, equity, and good faith, that the distractions of Ireland were to be appeased, and her affections conciliated."

Lord Grenville said, "that the present motion could not be adopted without breaking the solemn compact which had

been entered into between the two countries, without tearing asunder every bond of union and connection, and spreading distraction and division between the members of the British Empire. . . . If the motion was intended to implore his Majesty to employ his paternal care in remedying the discontents which prevail, it was unnecessary, and not only unnecessary—it was highly mischievous. . . . He dwelt on the improved state of Ireland—the tranquillity of the people, and the benign disposition of the crown. . . . “The interference of the British legislature, instead of remedying the discontents which prevailed, would tend to inflame them. It would induce the people of Ireland to imagine that their own legislation was indifferent to their welfare, and thus stir up the divisions which it was the object to appease.

Lord Fitzwilliam supported the right of interference. “The noble secretary (Lord Grenville) had said the people of Ireland were tranquil and happy. But was it a proof of this, that *acts of indemnity* had been passed in the Irish Parliament for proceedings *beyond the law*? If no circumstance of disorder appeared, why were whole parishes, baronies, and even counties, declared to be out of the King’s peace?”

The Earl of Liverpool “conceived that such discussions, instead of conciliating the affections of Ireland, would awaken jealousies between the countries, which would not be easily removed. The motion seemed to him to be as mischievous in its tendency as it was unconstitutional in its principle.”

The Earl of Moira “granted that the legislature of Ireland was independent; but maintained that, in every matter where the common interest of both countries was concerned, the British legislature had a right to interfere. In adverting to the persecutions in Ireland, he said, that no fewer than ninety-one householders had been banished from one of his own estates, after being plundered of their property, and many of them wounded in their persons. The discontents were not confined to one sect: they were common to the Protestants as well as the Catholics. The military were empowered to act with a ‘vigour beyond the law’—were told not to wait for the aid of magistrates, but to effect their purpose by using force, if force should be necessary? Were these things true, and would it be contended that this



country was not implicated in the result, or that it was foreign to its duty to interfere?"\*

"Restore," said the Duke of Bedford, "to the people of Ireland the person whom you have recalled—give back to **them** the man whom they tried and whom they admire—act on the principles on which he acted, and then discontents will cease. If you do not, God only knows into how much more dreadful a state that unhappy country may be reduced."

On a division of the House, the motion of Lord Moira was rejected. Contents, 21; non-contents, 91.

I have given enough, in this short abstract of the preceding debate, to show the unbending temper of Ministers, and their determination to persevere in that system towards Ireland which every humane and enlightened mind deplored.

The failure of the Earl of Moira's motion in the Lords did not deter Mr. Fox from bringing forward a similar motion in the Commons.†

The powerfully impressive speech delivered by Mr. Fox on this occasion may be regarded as an epitome of modern Irish history. As it is too long for insertion here, and would be injured by abbreviation, it will be found in the Appendix. I shall merely quote the following passages:—"I must here beg leave, pointedly, to express my abhorrence of the maxim, "*Divide et Impera*;" and, especially, that by such a truly diabolical maxim the government of Ireland should be regulated. On the contrary, I am convinced, that in order to render Ireland happy in itself, and useful in her connection with this country, every idea of ruling by division ought to be relinquished, and that the object of government should be to effect a complete union of all ranks of men. . . . I hope and trust that the discontents which threaten the separation of Ireland will be dissipated without the necessity of war. But now the extremity of rigour has been tried, the severity of despotism has been let loose, and the Government is driven to that state when the laws are not to be put

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\* "They set up the constitution they have destroyed, against the connexion they have endangered. They are in the double and destructive habit of setting the name against the substance—the name of liberty against any interference for its recovery."—*Mr. Grattan, Irish Parliament, April, 1797.*

† See Debate on Mr. Fox's motion on the state of Ireland, 23rd March, 1797.



In execution, but to be superseded. Ireland is precisely in that state which a person, well acquainted with the subject, defined to be despotism—‘where the Executive power is everything, and the rights of the people nothing.’ . . . . If you do not allay their discontents, there is no way but force to keep them in obedience. Can you convince them by the musket that their principles are false? Can you prove to them by the bayonet that their pretensions are unjust? Can you demonstrate to them by martial law that they enjoy the blessings of a free constitution? No, it is said, but they may be deterred from the prosecution of the objects which you have determined to refuse. But on what is this founded? On the history of Ireland itself? No; for the history of Ireland proves, that though repeatedly subdued, it could not be kept in awe by force; and the late examples will prove the effect which severity may be expected to produce. . . . . I would, therefore, concede; and if I found I had not conceded enough, I would concede more. I know of no way of governing mankind but by conciliating them. . . . . My wish is that the whole people of Ireland should have the same principles, the same system, the same operation of government. . . . . I would have the whole Irish Government regulated by Irish notions and Irish prejudices; and I firmly believe, according to an Irish expression, the more she is under the Irish Government, the more will she be bound to English interests. . . . . I say, therefore, try conciliation, but do not have recourse to arms.”

The motion of Mr. Fox was seconded by Sir Francis Burdett, in a bold and manly speech, his first essay in the House of Commons. “Whoever,” said the honourable Baronet, “has the slightest information concerning the situation of Ireland, must concur in the propriety of the motion; but without having been an eye-witness to the effects produced by the measures of Ministers in that country, it is impossible to have an adequate idea of the magnitude of the evils arising therefrom. Whoever has seen Ireland, has seen a country where the *fields are desolated, and the prisons overflowing with the victims of oppression*—has seen the shocking contrast between a profligate, extravagant government and an enslaved and impoverished people.”

The debate on Mr. Fox’s motion in the Commons varied

little from the discussion which the Earl of Moira's produced in the Lords.

In the sophistical language of Ministers, the same expressions of respect for the rights and independence of the Irish legislature were reiterated, while the beneficence of the crown was made the theme of unceasing panegyric. "Will it be maintained," said Mr. Pitt, "that the situation of Ireland **has** not been the frequent subject of his Majesty's thoughts? Can it with the shadow of propriety be urged that the royal mind has been at any time exempt from those considerations which may best promote the happiness of his people? What, then, can be the object of the address? . . . Our assenting to the address would be highly unconstitutional with respect to Ireland; and we could not for a moment entertain such an idea without being guilty of an unjustifiable interference in the duties of the legislative and executive government of that nation."

The Earl of Wycombe said, "that Ireland was at this moment in an alarming situation; he did not expect that any remedy would be applied to the evil by the Irish legislature. It did not appear to him that the Irish claimed any more than was just and reasonable. Instead of rigour, conciliation should be tried. He should have wished that the Irish Parliament had been left to themselves to settle this; but that parliament had entirely lost the confidence of the people. The truth was, that a majority of it was at the will of the British Cabinet."

The result of the debate evinced the determination of Ministers to resist every measure proposed for the conciliation of Ireland. The motion of Mr. Fox was lost in a majority of 136.\*

When the Earl of Moira made his last appeal to the British House of Lords, he seems to have entertained little hopes of effecting any conciliatory measure for Ireland.† "My Lords, I have seen in Ireland the most absurd, as well as the most disgusting tyranny that any nation ever groaned under. I have been myself a witness of it in many instances. I have seen it practised and unchecked; and the effects that have

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\* See Debate on Mr. Fox's motion on the state of Ireland, 23rd March, 1797.

† See Debate on the state of Ireland, 22nd November, 1797.

resulted from it have been such as I have stated to your Lordships. If such a tyranny be persevered in, the consequence must inevitably be the deepest and most universal discontent, and even hatred to the English name. I have seen, in that country, a marked distinction made between the English and the Irish. I have seen troops that have been sent full of this prejudice, that every inhabitant in that kingdom is a rebel to the British government. I have seen the most wanton insults practised upon men of all ranks and conditions. I have seen the most grievous oppression exercised, in consequence of a presumption, that the person who was the unfortunate object of such oppression, was in hostility to the government; and yet that has been done in a part of the country as quiet and as free from disturbance as the city of London. He who states these things should be prepared with proofs. I am prepared with them. . . . There is not one man, my Lords, in Ireland, who is not liable to be taken out of his house, at any hour, either of the day or night, to be kept in rigorous confinement, restricted from all correspondence with the persons who have the management of his affairs, be treated with mixed severity and insult, and yet never know the crime with which he is charged, nor the source from whence the information against him proceeded. Your lordships have hitherto detested the Inquisition. In what did that horrible institution differ from the system pursued in Ireland? Men, indeed, have not been put to the rack in Ireland, because that horrible engine was not at hand. But I do know instances of men being picketed in Ireland till they fainted; when they recovered, picketed again till they fainted; recovered again, and again picketed, till they fainted a third time; and this, in order to extort from the tortured sufferers a confession, either of their own guilt, or of the guilt of their neighbours. But I can even go farther: men have been half hanged and then brought to life, in order, by the fear of having that punishment repeated, to induce them to confess the crimes with which they have been charged. Good God! what must the general feeling be in a nation where such measures are adopted? My Lords, I could go much farther, but I choose to veil some of the most atrocious parts. These acts, which I have stated to your lordships, have been done so publicly, that I cannot but consider them as belonging to the system



which has been adopted. They have been done in the open day ; and if you do not hear the recitals of them from the newspapers of Ireland, it is because they are not published, from the fear of the publishers being exposed to the vengeance of the government if they did publish them. I know that authenticated relations of the most oppressive conduct have been refused insertion in the Irish newspapers on this account. The printer says, 'What punishment hangs over me if I do insert them?' What happened to the printers of the *Northern Star*? A party of troops were sent in broad day, and destroyed the whole property, types, and everything belonging to that paper."\* . . . It would be painful to follow his lordship through the recital of those melancholy and heart-rending statements which he submitted to the House ; upon the accuracy of which, he declared it was the dearest wish of his heart to be examined before the Privy Council, or at the bar of the House. "I think," said he, "the moment for conciliation is not passed. I think that Ireland may yet be saved ; but it can only be by an immediate change of measures. You say that the Irish are insensible of the benefits of the British Constitution, and you withhold all these benefits from them. You goad them with harsh and cruel punishments, and a general infliction and insult are thrown upon the kingdom. I have seen, my Lords, a conquered country held by military force ; but never did I see, in any conquered country, such a tone of insult as has been adopted by Great Britain towards Ireland. . . . I have made a last effort," continued his lordship—"I acquit my conscience. I have done my duty."

To the fearful, but mitigated, statement of the Earl of Moira—for he chose "to veil some of the most atrocious parts"—Lord Grenville replied. "The discussion," he said, "which the noble Lord seemed desirous to produce could be attended with no advantage ; it was, on the contrary, a discussion pregnant with mighty mischief. He was unable to discern what should alienate the affections of Ireland. . . . The noble Lord accused government of being hostilely inclined towards the sister kingdom, and eager to keep up in it a system of coercion. He might, however, confidently

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\* The *Press* newspaper, subsequently established in Dublin, was also put down by an act of violence.

appeal to their Lordships, if it had not been the uniform disposition of government to adopt an opposite line of conduct. For the whole space of thirty years his Majesty's Government had been distinguished by the same uniform tenderness of regard, by the same undeviating adherence to the mild principles of a conciliatory system. . . . He would now proceed to the general statement of the cruelties which the noble Lord asserted had marked this system of coercion which he so bitterly inveighed against, and which he insinuated was principally promoted and acted on by the British military. But it was no difficult matter to vindicate the British military from any imputation of the kind; for humanity and good nature were the characteristics of the English disposition. There might be individual exceptions; but, if such excesses had been perpetrated, were there no courts of justice? Indeed, if a system so rigorous and cruel had been pursued, it must naturally be resented by a spirited and independent people." The noble Secretary endeavoured to palliate the harshness and severity of the military by adverting to the "machinations" and "conspiracy" of the Irish people. He eulogized the "exemplary moderation" of the Irish Viceroy. . . . "If rigorous measures were necessarily pursued, no blame could surely be imputed to him; the circumstances of the country required it; and if any partial abuses did exist we had only to lament them. He could not, therefore, see what utility could be derived from the removal of a person whose conduct in every respect was highly commendable. He conceived that the system recommended by Lord Moira would only tend to vilify the government, and bring all its measures into contempt and disgrace. The contrary system must therefore be persevered in; and to the spirited exertions of the British military should we owe the preservation of Irish laws, of Irish property, and of Irish lives."

This speech of Lord Grenville (I remember the circumstance well) produced a high feeling of indignation throughout Ireland. Many avowed their hostility to the measures of the British Cabinet, who had not hitherto expressed their sentiments in so decided a tone of disapprobation, or made up their minds to a more bold and manly resistance of the system. Men of this description seemed to have been taken by surprise; the speech of the British Secretary had fallen



unexpectedly amongst them. They had long been familiarised to the foul and irritating language of the more virulent members of their own legislature — Toler, Fitzgibbon, Beresford, Forster, and others. But these were regarded as the chartered calumniators of their country, the oppressors of her people, the open and undisguised enemies of her rights, and the disturbers of her domestic repose. From them nothing was expected, and through them little was to be feared. It is true that they had been the early advisers for coercion; but their present hostility would have proved impotent, and they must have shrunk before the indignant voice of a united people, had they not been supported by the whole influence of the British Government in their iniquitous career. But the speech of Lord Grenville afforded evidence conclusive of the most deep and malignant designs. It betrayed an organized conspiracy of power against right; and, while it fixed the minds of the wavering, it rallied, on the side of Union, men who were subsequently distinguished amongst the boldest and most determined in the cause. Many of those matters came within the range of my own observation; and, in particular, I knew two commissioned officers of the crown, who, on reading that celebrated speech which was designated “The British Ministers’ declaration of war against the Irish people,” withdrew from the service, and embraced with enthusiasm the desperate fortunes of their country. Even at this remote period, when more than thirty years have elapsed, what Irishman can revert to the speech of the British Secretary, and suppress his feelings of abhorrence? Gracious Heaven! was it not enough to visit our ill-fated country with all the horrors of military despotism—fire, torture, and lingering death—but mockery and insult must be added to the burthen of her wrongs? “Unable to discern what could alienate the affections of Ireland!” Cruelty, injustice, and oppression—uniform, unmitigated, and unexampled! Such was the system of that boasted “tenderness of regard,” “undeviating adherence to the mild principles of conciliation,” which drove Ireland to despair, and thousands, and tens of thousands, to an untimely grave. It was a system so base in the design, so atrocious in the execution, that none who possessed a manly heart would forego the noble privilege of his nature, and succumb under



its oppression, while he retained the power of resistance. Yes, we beheld "the tenderness of regard—the mild principles of conciliation," in the burning cottage—in the desolated mansion—in the ensanguined hand of ruffian violence, reeking with the blood of the generous and the brave; while the shrieks of defenceless virtue, and the maledictions of despair, reverberated throughout the land, and re-echoed to heaven for vengeance.

The *humane* Secretary conceived it no difficult matter to "vindicate the British soldiery," who, in the language of Lord Moira, were sent amongst us full of the prejudice that every inhabitant of Ireland was a rebel and a foe. Yes, for the honour of humanity, I am proud to acknowledge that there were men in the British ranks who paused between "duty" and torture; and notwithstanding the pains taken to instil into their minds prejudices of the most deadly cast, some, from a sojourn amongst us, and a deep sense of our wrongs, abandoned those feelings, and exercised, on occasions, a forbearance which our rulers had neither the virtue to appreciate nor the humanity to approve. I have known instances of that forbearance. I have experienced it in my own person. I have witnessed the interposition of the British soldier to restrain the ferocity of the infuriate bigot, ready to pour libations from the heart's blood of his unarmed fellow-countrymen, to the honour of Faction, the god of his idolatry. I have known the British soldier to protect the defenceless prisoner from the fury of a yeomanry host, thirsting for blood, when resistance had ceased; and I have known him to sympathise in misfortune when he was unable to administer relief. But what does this amount to? That humanity and valour, which are so closely allied, may be found in the ranks of our deadliest foe; while the blood congeals with horror, or boils indignant in our veins, as we trace the general character of our oppressors, through the wide-spread ruin and desolation of our country.

"Were there no courts of justice?" Lord Grenville tauntingly asks. No. The laws were superseded: military despotism had usurped the seat of justice, and it was a mockery of our misery, befitting a British Minister, to propound the question. "If a system," he observes, "so rigorous and cruel had been pursued, it must naturally be resented by a spirited and independent people." It was precisely so; just

as the British Cabinet had designed. They looked with impatience for the exercise of that resentment. "They had sown the seed, they had nurtured the growth, and they expected to be called upon to reap the harvest." Yes, it was a harvest of blood! But, while it deluged the land of the native, it had nearly proved fatal to the invader. Under the desolating system of a "Heaven-born Minister," this course of savage warfare was pursued, unequalled for its ferocity by the most barbarous tribes of the desert, and unprecedented for its cruelty in the annals of human oppression.

Such was the system of "tender regard—of mild conciliatory principles," commencing by the subversion of the laws of the country—the violation of the constitution, and ending in the profuse and wanton expenditure of national blood! And this was the system, which it was pronounced a crime of the highest political magnitude in Irishmen to oppose—of the darkest treason to resist—whether in defence of their altars from profanation, their homes from incendiarism and pillage, or their wives and daughters from the pollution of a brutal foe. Oh! it was "a crime" which none but the base and pusillanimous would shrink from avowing—"a treason" which thousands gloried in expiating with their blood.

As the miseries of Ireland increased, ministers seemed more callous to the ills of their own infliction; while those members of the legislature who felt abhorrent to the atrocious system left no measure untried to place before the Crown the delinquency of the Cabinet. If this produced no other effect, "it served to show the Irish nation that a part, at least, of the British Parliament were mindful of their interests.\* The same generous feeling was evinced, not only when the state of Ireland was the subject of debate, but on every occasion when her wrongs could be adverted to.

"The treatment of Ireland," said Mr. Fox, "was such as to harrow up the soul; it was shocking to the heart to think that a nation of brothers was thus to be trampled on like the most remote colony of conquered strangers."†

"By means of the immense revenue," observes Sir Francis Burdett, "raised upon the people of this country, a corrupt

\* Mr. Curwen on Mr. Fox's motion—State of Ireland.

† Debate on the Commons, on the Assessed Taxes Bill, 14th December, 1797.



minister has debauched the very spirit of the nation, and prepared us to become slaves ; and the proof of it is, our want of generosity and spirit in submitting to become the instrument for enslaving others. For let no man flatter himself that he is not implicated in the guilt of that horrible conduct which the Minister has adopted with regard to Ireland, unless he has done all in his power to prevent it.

. . . I shall consider the measures pursued in Ireland as the measures of the Minister ; and here his conduct stands unrivalled in the annals of human atrocity, exceeding in cruelty even that of the modern monster, Robespierre ; in as much as the cruelty of inflicting upon men excruciating torture exceeds the cruelty of inflicting upon them immediate death. A noble personage, on his return from Ireland, made the public acquainted with many instances of savage barbarity ; but individual instances of barbarity are scarcely worth notice in this stupendous system of cruelty and oppression. . . . Let it not be thought that what I am now stating is irrelative to the subject before you ; it is one feature of that political monster engendered from the corruption of the British constitution : nor are the people of England uninterested in it, or ought they to behold, with selfish indifference, the unheard-of sufferings of the Irish people."

On the third reading of the Assessed Taxes Bill, we find Mr. Fox again adverting to the situation of Ireland. "The Irish people," said he, have been scourged by the iron hand of oppression, and subjected to the horrors of military execution, and are now in a situation too dreadful for the mind to contemplate without dismay, or the heart to feel without horror. . . . Look to Ireland : after the fatal consequences that have ensued upon your breaking the promises which you authorised Lord Fitzwilliam to make ; do you conceive that you will have unanimity there without Parliamentary Reform, and the Emancipation of the Catholics ? After the inhuman dragooning and horrible executions, the recital of which makes the blood run cold ; after so much military cruelty, not in one but in almost every part of the country ; is it possible for this administration to procure unanimity in Ireland ? I will do them the justice to say, they do not themselves expect it ; they trust there to the force of a military government."



Lord Holland.—“You should withhold the supplies until you have a pledge for a change of Ministers and of system ; a change that would unite the hands and hearts of the people of Ireland. That generous country, my Lords, is very ungenerously treated.”\*

When the Duke of Bedford moved an address to His Majesty for a change of Ministers,† he commented feelingly on the state of Ireland. “There is another topic,” said the noble Duke, “which this view suggests, on which I know not how to speak. Consider the situation of Ireland at the present moment. It has been said that you ought not to interfere in the affairs of Ireland? But do not the ministers of this country interfere in the affairs of Ireland? Do they not, by the system which they pursue, alienate from you the affections of the Sister Kingdom? My Lords, were I to enter into a detail of the atrocities which have been committed in Ireland, the picture would appal the stoutest heart. It could be proved that the most shocking cruelties have been perpetrated ; but what could be expected, if men, kept in strict discipline, were all at once allowed to give loose to their fury and their passions.”

Lord Holland desired to make some observations “on the very important subject of Ireland.” While he deprecated the system of coercion, “he was persuaded that His Majesty’s present Ministers could not tranquillize Ireland, even by conciliation. How could they conciliate,” he asked, “whose concessions are always known to be the concessions of weakness and of fear, and who never granted to the Irish—the most generous people upon earth—anything without struggle and resistance? . . . To dismiss Ministers is therefore necessary ; and I, for my part,” said he, “will support in or out of this House such Ministers supplying their place as will take measures to conciliate Ireland. By conciliation, I mean a total change of measures, and a full concession to every just demand.”‡

The Marquis of Downshire “was not afraid of the effect of coercion, although he liked concession, when well applied. And upon that subject he must observe, that ever since the

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\* Debate in the Lords on the Assessed Taxes Bill.

† 22nd March, 1798.—See Debate.

‡ See Debate on the Duke of Bedford’s motion for a change of Ministers.

present King ascended the throne, every concession had been made that could be made towards Ireland. She had a trade as free as could be safely made so. Every Catholic was as free as the safety of the State would admit; were the Catholics to have an equal share in the Government with the Protestants, the Government and the country would be lost.”\*

If such were the sentiments of the noble Marquis, and we do not stop to question his candour on the subject—we shall read with less surprise the following declaration. “I mean not to go back” said he, “from any measures I have taken, or any advice I have given; and here I aver, that I was one of the first to recommend to the Irish Government the system of coercion against those traitors and rebels, the United Irishmen.” And again he observes, “All who are acquainted with the dispositions of those rebels, are unanimous in the belief, that coercion alone can produce any salutary effect upon them. I never knew a Catholic of knowledge or education, who was a friend to what is termed unqualified Catholic emancipation, nor an enlightened Presbyterian who was an advocate for Radical Reform!”† His Lordship’s intercourse with the educated and enlightened of his Catholic and Presbyterian fellow-countrymen, must have been very limited indeed.

Notwithstanding the almost hopeless prospect of procuring any alleviation to the sufferings of Ireland, subsequent motions were brought forward, both in the Lords and the Commons, on the “deplorable state of that distracted country.” The speeches, however, have been lost to the public, from the precaution which was used for the exclusion of strangers from the House, and the threats of punishment which were held out against those who should presume to publish an account of its proceedings when the situation of Ireland was the subject of discussion! All that we have been enabled to learn is, that in the Commons Mr. Sheridan moved for the appointment of a Committee “to take into consideration the state of Ireland;” and that after an eloquent but melancholy representation of her sufferings, his motion was negatived by a majority of one hundred and sixteen. He then moved an

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\* See Debate on the Duke of Bedford’s motion for a change of Ministers.

† Extracts from Lord Downshire’s speech in the British House of Lords, 26th March, 1798.



address to the King, for a *total* change of men and measures, which was negatived without a division.\*

In the Lords, so rigorously was the order of exclusion enforced, that even the members of the Commons House were not permitted to attend the debate. The Duke of Leinster, with feelings deeply agitated, moved an address to the King, into which the following was incorporated on the motion of the Duke of Norfolk:—"And we farther feel it our duty to state to his Majesty, that understanding the system of coercion has been enforced with a rigour that, if related in detail, would too severely wound his paternal feelings; that confessions have been extorted by torture and scourges, a practice held in abhorrence in every other State in Europe; to implore his Majesty that he will be graciously pleased, as the most probable means to put a stop to the calamities that pervade a part of that unhappy country, to direct an immediate change of system, as far as depends on the Executive government, and to remove from their stations those persons under whose authority these atrocities have been perpetrated, and towards whom the afflicted people of Ireland can feel no sentiments but those of *Hatred* and *Revenge*." This motion was also lost—on a division of the House—Contents 20, Non-contents 70; majority 50.

A strong protest was entered on the Journals, against the rejection of the Duke of Leinster's motion: (Signed)

BEDFORD,  
DEVONSHIRE,  
DORCHESTER,  
RAWDON,†  
WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM,  
NORFOLK, E. M.,

HOLLAND,  
PONSONBY,  
LEINSTER,  
SUFFOLK & BERKSHIRE,  
SHAFTESBURY,  
SCARBOROUGH.

In debate on the king's message to Parliament, respecting the service of the British Militia Regiments in Ireland;‡ deep feelings of indignation were expressed against the adoption of a measure which was pronounced "unconstitutional, unjust, and impolitic."

"A man's loyalty is to be estimated," said Lord William

\* See Debate in the Commons, on the 14th, and in the Lords, on the 15th June, 1798, on the state of Ireland.

† Earl of Moira.

‡ See Debate on the King's message, 19th June, 1798.



Russel, "by the desire he testifies to imbrue his hands in his brother's blood. I too well remember the American war, even to vote one shilling, or one man, for subjugating Ireland, until conciliatory measures shall have been tried."

Mr. Sheridan.—"After Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled—after the hopes which had been raised were blasted—when the spirit of the people was beaten down, insulted, despised—I will ask any gentleman to point out a single act of conciliation which has emanated from the Government of Ireland? On the contrary, has not that country exhibited one continual scene of the most grievous oppression, of the most vexatious proceedings; arbitrary punishments inflicted; torture declared necessary by the highest authority, in the sister kingdom, next to that of the Legislature? And do gentlemen say that the indignant spirit which is roused by such exercise of Government is unprovoked? After being betrayed, duped, insulted—disappointed in their dearest hopes, and again thrown into the hands of the rulers they detested and despised—was it impossible they should feel emotions of indignation and discontent. . . . The struggle is not one of partial disaffection, but it is a contest between the people and the Government."

Mr. Tierney.—"Would not consent to send troops to Ireland. . . . It was certain that the people were in arms against the Government; nor was it easy to conceive how, having been *scourged, burnt, and massacred*, they should have any other feeling than aversion to that Government. What could he think of a Government by which General Abercrombie was dismissed for adding to his other excellent qualities that of humanity? . . . He would not give a man nor a guinea until the *true cause* of the rebellion was known. . . . He might indeed stand by a patient spectator, but he would not be an accessory."

Mr. Fox made a last powerful but despairing effort to rescue Ireland from the ills which a wicked and unfeeling government had inflicted on her; and on the 22nd of June, he moved the following resolution:—

"That this House, understanding it to be matter of public notoriety, that the system of coercion has been enforced in Ireland, with a rigour shocking to humanity, and particularly that scourges and other tortures have been employed, for the purpose of extorting confession, a practice justly held in abhor-

rence in every civilized part of the world, is of opinion that an immediate stop should be put to practices so disgraceful to the British name."

A similar resolution was moved by the Duke of Bedford, in the Lords, and in the same energetic language which Mr. Fox had adopted in the Commons. These were severally rejected by overwhelming majorities.\*

The following Protests, on the rejection of the Duke of Bedford's motion, was entered upon the Journals:—

"Dissentient—

"1. Because I was shocked that an address to the king, upon so awful a subject as the present state of Ireland, should have been rejected, without one single syllable being said by the king's ministers upon the subject.

"2. Because I look back with pride to that law which our ancestors obtained, which says, 'No free man shall be taken, or imprisoned, or disseized of his freehold or liberties, or free customs, or be outlawed, or exiled, or any otherwise destroyed. Nor will we pass judgment upon him, nor condemn him, but by lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. We will sell to no man: we will not deny or defer to any man either justice or right;' and because I agree with the commentary of that great lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, upon this chapter of Magna Charta, wherein he says, 'No man destroyed'—that is, forejudged of life or limb, disherited, or put to torture or death; and because I think that to flog, picket, and half-hang any of our fellow-subjects, in order to extort confession, is, 'a putting to torture,' and therefore not only outrageous to humanity but directly against Magna Charta, the great corner-stone of our laws and liberties; and whoever have dared to put to torture any of our fellow-subjects in Ireland, or elsewhere, have violated the great charter, have betrayed their country, and ought speedily to be brought to condign punishment, for these their treasonable practices; and whoever have dared openly and publicly to justify torture, upon the ground of policy, deserve the same execrations from their countrymen as have been usually given to the cruelest inquisitors of Rome.

"3. Because, whenever our brethren and fellow-subjects in Ireland, or elsewhere, are flogged, picketed, half-hanged, and otherwise tortured, in order to extort confession, I hold it to be the bounden duty of every man, in his different station, to use all the legal means in his power to declare his abhorrence of such diabolical and tyrannical measures.

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\* Motion in the Commons for a change of system in Ireland, 22nd June; and also in the Lords, on the 27th June.



"4. Because I hold, that when an Irishman is tortured, an Englishman is tortured ; for the same men who, in violation of the laws of their country, and of every dictate of humanity, dare to put Irishmen to torture, will not hesitate, when they think it expedient, to put Englishmen to torture also.

"5. Because it is a moral truth that cannot be denied, that if men have been driven, by flogging and by tortures, contrary to all law and reason, into open resistance, the guilt and consequences of that resistance are imputable to those who flog and torture contrary to all law and reason, and not to those who are thereby driven to resistance.

"6. Because to flog and torture men in open resistance, for the sake of employing a power in the hands of those who flog and torture, to crush that resistance, and thereby to make themselves more secure, is not only a refinement of cruelty, against which law, reason, justice, humanity, and nature, cry aloud, but which the experience of all times teaches us will never answer.

"7. Because the history of the world tells us, that it is no small matter which provokes a people to throw off their allegiance ; and that when they have thrown off their allegiance, attention to their just demands, and protection in the enjoyment of their rights, liberties, and properties, are the only means by which an allegiance worth having can be recovered.

"8. Because I think the times call for a declaration of these principles, and that to act upon them is the only method of healing the present discontents, and preventing the speedy ruin of our country.

"OXFORD AND MORTIMER."

"Dissentient—

"Because the House having thought fit to reject the various motions respecting the calamitous situation of Ireland which have been submitted to their consideration—in the first instance for inquiry, in the second for lenity and conciliation, and in the last for putting an immediate stop at least to the rigorous proceedings of the army in Ireland, where, under the name of a system of coercion, we have reason to fear that atrocious cruelties have been practised—we think it our duty to record the nature of the evidence on which we have proceeded, and on which our conviction of the truth of the facts is founded, and on that evidence to appeal, in our own justification, to our country, to the world, and to posterity. We affirm that the facts are undisputed, that the evidence of them is irresistible, and that the effects produced by this barbarous system convict the authors and advisers of such a total want of wisdom, even for their own pretended purposes, as can only be exceeded by the shocking cruelty of the principles avowed, and of the practice recommended by them. We shall state some of the documents we refer to, in the order of time in which they have appeared, in



order to show that this system of coercion has not been hastily resorted to on the spur of an instant necessity, but that it was deliberately resolved on long before it could be justified or palliated by any of the pretences or causes which have since been assigned in defence of it. . . . .

(Signed) BEDFORD.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

PONSONBY.

HOLLAND.

ALBEMARLE.

KING.

THANET.

The documents to which the Lords in their Protest refer, in order to show that the system of coercion was not hastily resorted to, but *deliberately resolved on*, are copied from the instructions of the Lord-Lieutenant and Council to the General Officers commanding in Ireland, also from the public orders and proclamations issued by those General Officers in their respective districts. As I shall have occasion to advert to these documents in the progress of my work, I am unwilling, by giving them insertion here, to add to the length of this Introduction, which has already exceeded the limits originally designed. The interesting and important extracts, selected from the debates in the British Lords and Commons, I have given in form, as abridged as the elucidation of the subject could possibly admit of. They will, I have no doubt, repay the reader for the time he may devote to the perusal; while they present him with an incontrovertible historical record of a conspiracy as dark and malignant as ever the demon spirit of Tyranny devised against the peace, the happiness, and freedom of a nation.

SEQUEL TO  
PERSONAL NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
IRISH REBELLION.

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CHAPTER I.

*Formation and Progress of the Alliance between the Irish Union and  
the Government of France.*

NATIONS have their sympathies as well as individuals. France at all times evinced a lively interest in the fortunes of Ireland. For more than a hundred years her armies, her colleges, her court were the asylum of the brave and persecuted of our land.

After the memorable defence of Limerick—that splendid scene of Irish valour, and the last stay of Ireland's independence—her gallant army was received into the service of France, and treated with all the courtesy and kindness which a high-minded and chivalrous nation conceived due to the brave but unfortunate defenders of their country's rights. The perfidy of England in the violation of a solemn treaty, and the intolerable enactments of her penal code, served to strengthen the hands of her rival, while the bold and enterprising spirit of Irishmen contributed to the glory of France, and in the field of victory taught a lesson to Britain, which she had not the wisdom to appreciate.

The enmity which had long subsisted between the powers of England and of France was not likely to be lessened by the conspicuous part which the latter acted in the glorious struggle for the independence of the New World, when the

ambition of England invaded American rights, and vainly opposed the united will of a people determined to be free. The happy effects of the American revolution were felt throughout the globe; and on the waves of the Atlantic a spirit of liberty was wafted to the Old World, which tyrants have combated, but never can subdue.

In the memorable era of 1789, when France threw off the yoke of her ancient dynasty, and in the generous glow of a noble independence, extended the hand of freedom to nations oppressed, and encouraged the rising hopes of liberty in the vassalated states of Europe, Ireland was not an inattentive observer of the scene. A new spirit was infused into the nation—the feelings of the liberal and enlightened were arrayed on the side of France—public rejoicings took place—congratulatory addresses emanated from large and influential assemblages of our people—money, arms, and ammunition, were voted and supplied; and while surrounding powers combined to extinguish the flame of Gallic freedom, a ray was extended to the regions of oppression, from the beacon light of liberty which illumined the world. Had the wisdom and moderation of France been commensurate with the early success and the splendour of Republican arms, Europe might have enjoyed the fruits of that liberty which the victories of France had achieved, and nought but the frenzied infatuation of Frenchmen could have destroyed. But this is not the subject of our inquiry.

France successfully resisted the power of Britain, which led the crusade against her rights; and to crush the wide-spreading hopes of freedom, subsidized the hireling despots of Europe to war against the liberties of the human race. The gigantic arm of France drove the foe from her interior; but the ambition of conquest engaged her in foreign war: and while a host of enemies encircled her frontier, the fleets of Britain blockaded her ports, intercepted her commerce, cut off her external resources, and closed those channels of supply—the chief support of an exchequer nearly exhausted. France, though internally powerful, wanted an external ally. Her attention was directed to Ireland, and the state of that country being faithfully depicted to her, she could not fail to perceive the advantage which a connection with it would afford the Republic.

Ireland, the granary of Britain; the inexhaustible source



of her naval and colonial support ; was alike the prolific soil for the supply of her seamen and her soldiers, and, as the right arm of her empire, an impenetrable barrier on the West. England had yielded to foreign invasion, but never could be conquered while Ireland battled by her side. Towards Ireland she had long pursued a system of misrule, which, with more recent\* acts of injustice, had at last produced on the Irish mind the desire of separation, which it was the interest of France to render effective.

Many and deep were the causes of Ireland's complaints. The great majority of her population felt themselves excluded from a participation in laws, which they had no interest to defend, and which it was treason to resist. England was sensible of her injustice ; but she had neither the candour to acknowledge the crime, nor the honesty to redress the wrong. The complaints of the aggrieved were replied to by fresh enactments of severity, and our own venal legislature was made the medium of oppression. A sweeping denunciation was levelled against all who essayed in a link of national union to stem a torrent of abuses beyond the power of human sufferance to endure. The Insurrection Act punished with death those who had either administered or subscribed to that test, which formed the bond of mutual confidence, and was regarded as a moral pledge of national virtue ; while a *Cherished Faction* was organized, under the auspices of Government, for perpetuating religious rancour, bound by oaths of the most unsocial and unconstitutional nature.

The Insurrection Act was accompanied by a system of legalized outrage, as unjustifiable in the construction as barbarous in the execution. The inhabitants of whole districts (it might be said, eventually, of the whole island) were compelled to retire at sunset within their respective dwellings ; and until after sunrise were prohibited, under the severest penalties, from leaving the "Prison House."

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\* "The laws which had been enacted in this country for two or three years back, had been of so severe and arbitrary a cast, as to have rendered the constitution almost a name. But the manner in which those laws had been executed was still more severe than the laws themselves. . . . In severity of legislation, they had exceeded any nation in Europe ; but in severity of execution they had exceeded the severity even of that legislation."—*Extract from the Speech of Mr. Tighe in the Irish House of Commons.*

The "*Domiciliary Visit*" commenced. It was a visit of darkness and of horror. The depraved mind of man never devised a project more atrocious. I have adverted to it in another place, and it is with pain I return to the heart-rending scene. There every sense of moral order, or feeling of humanity, was abandoned. The door, whether of the humble cottage or the lordly mansion, at the dark and dreary hour of night was forced by an armed and turbulent band; and the father, husband, or brother, torn from the grasp of his agonizing family, was dragged to torture—perhaps to death!\* or, doomed to a fate of more lengthened suffering, was hurried on board a prison-ship, and without trial or impeachment like a felon transported to the distant colonies of Britain; or drafted to the ranks of her Prussian ally, one of her "*Illustrious Subsidies*" in the Gallic crusade.

The tyranny exercised under the sanction of the Insurrection Act has not been surpassed in the annals of crime. It was a covert to the magisterial ruffian in the grossest violation of law—to the licensed intruder in the indulgence of every base or vengeful feeling; and this was the enactment which Ministers, with audacious effrontery, designated "*An act for the tranquillisation of Ireland.*" Such was the state of our country when France tendered us her aid.

An alliance with a foreign Republic had not been unprecedented in these realms. England had set the example in her Revolution of 1688, which obtained the appellation of "*Glorious,*" because successful in the result. Ireland

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\* "I will mention two general principles of conduct," said Mr. Browne, "which have been adopted, so atrocious and extraordinary as to be almost incredible, and which yet, if any member in the House would deny, he would sit down and not open his lips further. The one was the *general* rule that had been adopted to burn the house of any peasant who was not at home at a particular hour of the night. . . . The other, taking men who were supposed guilty of treasonable offences, but against whom there was no evidence, out of their houses, and shooting them in cold blood."

"The barbarities," said Sir Laurence Parsons, "which have been committed—barbarities of which he had a volume of evidence—these authenticated affidavits (holding them in his hand), and which he would, if called upon, lay on the table, and prove at the bar. Enormities, at which the blood of humanity would freeze, had withdrawn many men, faithful and zealous, from their allegiance."—*Irish Parliamentary Debates.*



accepted the aid of a foreign power to free her from her oppressors; conceiving that allegiance, the reciprocal duty between the monarch and the people, ceased to bind when protection was withdrawn from the subject.\* But, jealous of her independence, she expressly stipulated for the free and uninfluenced formation of her own laws, and the inviolable recognition of that form of government which the will of her people should adopt. To this the faith of the Republic was pledged; and an armament was shortly after equipped from the port of Brest, under the command of the celebrated General Hoche, whose ardour in the cause of Ireland only terminated with his existence.

The failure of this expedition did not produce on the Irish mind the abandonment of hope; on the contrary, it led some of the most influential members of the Union, in conjunction with others of high character and political weight, to conceive the project of effecting a conciliation between the government and the people, without a recurrence to the fearful alternative of arms. The sword of resistance had not then been unsheathed; and it was still within the power of the Legislature, by retracting its steps, to avert the impending evil. The late expedition had given an awful warning. The facility of invasion could not now be questioned;† nor the bulwark of Britain regarded a barrier to a descent on our shores.‡ The consideration of these

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\* “Then, for the first time, did the Government of Ireland hold forth to the people of Ireland the dangerous example of violating the law, and then it was that the populace of Ireland were for the first time taught to believe that they *were not within the protection of the law*, and then it was that they *ceased to respect the law*.”—*Extract from the Speech of Sir Laurence Parsons in the Irish Commons.*

† The armament from Brest met no interruption whatever from the British Fleets. During its passage to Bantry Bay, the several days it remained off the Irish coast, or on its return to France, it had not encountered a single British ship of war.

‡ The facility of invading Ireland aroused the fears of Englishmen; and induced Mr. Whitbread, on the 3rd of March, 1797, in the Commons, and the Earl of Albemarle, on the 16th, in the Lords, to move for an “inquiry into the measures taken for the protection of Ireland.” Both these motions were negatived by large majorities; but truths were elicited in the discussion which by no means tended to allay public alarm. “It appears,” said Mr. Whitbread, “by the most authentic information, that there was not anything like an adequate force for defence in that part of the country. There were not at the time more, if so many, as 3000 (Mr. Whitbread with more accuracy might have said 1000) regular



circumstances encouraged hopes favourable to concession, and a last effort was made to procure, through the medium of a reformed legislature, a redress of those wrongs which had placed Ireland on the verge of revolution, and her connection with Britain on the cast of a die.

But this, like every preceding effort, proved ineffective, and some of the most distinguished members of the legislature withdrew from the House in disgust.

"The House," said Mr. Curran, "seem pretty nearly unanimous for force ; I am sorry for it, for I bode the worst from it. I will retire from a scene in which I can do no good ; I cannot however go without a parting entreaty, that men will reflect on the awful responsibility in which they stand to their country and to their conscience before they set *an example to the people of abandoning the Constitution and the Laws, and resorting to the horrible expedient of force.*" \*

"We have offered you our measure," said Mr. Grattan : "you will reject it ; we deprecate yours ; you will persevere—having no hopes left to persuade or dissuade ; and having discharged our duty, we shall trouble you no more, and *after this day I shall not attend the House of Commons.*" †

Had the Irish Government attended to the salutary admonition of the people, and conceded those measures which justice and humanity equally demanded, little doubt was entertained that further intercourse would have been suspended with the Directory of France. And it was not until this last effort proved abortive, and success became hopeless, that the Executive ‡ renewed its negotiations for

troops to oppose the whole force of the French. The city of Cork was, therefore, in the most imminent peril of falling into their hands, had not that God, who has so often favoured and protected this country, prevented it. In that city were contained stores and provisions of various kinds, to the amount of nearly, if not quite, *a million and a half sterling.* Among these stores were the provisions intended for the use of the British Navy for the next year ; so that had they been taken or destroyed, the navy, splendid as its achievements have been at all times when called into action, would have been, for a year to come, *altogether annihilated.*"

\* See Debates on the Question of Reform in the Irish Commons, 15th May, 1797.

† *Ibid.*

‡ The Executive Directory of the Irish Union was the official organ of the nation's voice ; and to the wisdom and direction of that body was submitted every measure of importance connected with either the internal or external interests of the great national association, of which they

aid. France reiterated her assurances of friendship with her firm determination never to abandon the interests of Ireland until a final separation from England should be effected.

The first overture from the Directory had been accompanied by an offer of 15,000 troops, with a large supply of ammunition and arms; and the expedition, subsequently led by General Hoche, was proof of the sincerity of the Republic. But Ireland had begun strong in her united numbers, and relying on her physical force, and the energies of her people, stipulated for a smaller number of troops, with an additional quantity of arms, a force sufficient to aid in the liberation of the country, but incompetent to subdue it; for under no consideration would she entertain the idea of submitting to the dominion either of England or of France. Ten thousand men, therefore, was the utmost extent of the aid required, and five thousand the minimum, commuting the extra number of men for an additional supply of arms, together with officers of experience, and light artillery for the field. This, in the ardent spirit of the time, was considered sufficient for enabling Ireland to throw off the British yoke, and to establish, for ever, her independence.

From the failure of the expedition to Bantry Bay, in the month of December, 1796, until the following June, 1797, no further armament was prepared for the Irish coast. About this period the Batavian Republic, at the instance of the French Government, made a powerful exertion for the equipment of a fleet; and, notwithstanding the disordered state of her marine and military departments, she soon collected in the Texel 16 sail of the line, with a number of frigates, under the command of the intrepid De Winter; and embarked 12,000 land forces, headed by General Daendels, commander-in-chief of the Batavian army—a bold and dar-

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formed the head. I have refrained—and from motives for which I am only accountable to myself—from all personal reference to the individuals who composed this council; and on the same principle, I decline particularising the envoys and agents engaged in foreign mission. If some have afforded employment for the pen of the historical biographer, it is enough for my purpose to state, that, possessing the confidence of their countrymen, they experienced the marked attention of foreign states. That their talents and acquirements were of the first order, the high and important duties they were selected to discharge are sufficient proof; and that they discharged these with zeal, ability, and devoted fidelity, the life and death of some of the most distinguished testify.



ing soldier—who, as well as the Admiral of the Fleet, was warmly attached to the interests of Ireland.

The equipment of this formidable expedition was officially announced, and the country prepared for its immediate reception. Never, perhaps, was the public mind more deeply interested. The intensity of feeling, which it is impossible to express, can only be conceived by those who, having all at stake, impatiently await the doubtful issue. Many a longing eye was directed to the coast. Weeks and months passed on and no foreign sail appeared ; a second time the winds protected the empire of Britain. Every attempt to leave the Texel proved abortive. The vessels for more than two months were crowded with troops ; provisions became scarce ; the forces were disembarked ; and the expedition was abandoned.

Though the Batavian army might not have excited all that confidence and enthusiasm which the appearance of French soldiers would have inspired, there was no reason to question the sincerity of the Dutch Government, the disposition of the troops, or the ardour of the officers under whom they served. No sacrifice by them was considered too great for the “attainment of Ireland’s independence.” With an unprecedented magnanimity, the Batavian Government embarked their whole disposable force, naval and military, in the expedition ; giving to Ireland the same assurances which she had demanded from France—non-interference with her laws, and the will of her people.

The relinquishment of the Texel expedition ; the death of General Hoche ; and the expulsion of Carnot from the French Directory—which several occurrences took place nearly at the same period of time—were each and all attended with disastrous consequences to the prospects of the Union. The attachment of Hoche was sincere ; the services of Carnot important ; while the high talents and combined exertions of both were directed to the attainment of an object, of which each had the discernment to appreciate the value. The expansion of their minds was alike displayed in the Cabinet and in the field ; and their plans arranged on such a scale of magnitude, that to render them operative, was to render them successful.

The two expeditions prepared for Ireland, and mainly through the exertions of Carnot and Hoche, attest the powers



of the masterly minds that directed. The first, from Brest, comprised a fleet of 43 sail, of which 17 were of the line of 74 gun-ships, 13 frigates of 36 guns each, and 13 vessels of minor force, including transports. These carried an effective land-army of nearly 15,000 men—40,000 stand of arms—an abundant supply of ammunition, with a formidable train of field artillery and heavy cannon. The second equipment, in the Texel, was on a scale little inferior to the expedition from Brest. It comprised, as already observed, the entire sea and land forces of the Batavian Republic.

The disorganised state of the marine—the depressed condition of the exchequer, and, more particularly, the discordancy in the government of France, excluded every prospect of the equipment of an early expedition for Ireland. But the conclusion of a peace with Austria gave new energy to the Directory, and called forth fresh assurances that the interests of their ally should never be abandoned, nor hostilities against England cease, without a full recognition of Ireland's independence. These communications, announced through the able and indefatigable agents of Irish affairs in France, gave confidence to our people on the one hand, and, through the influence of the Executive, restrained their impetuosity on the other. They looked to the approaching spring—the promised period—which was to terminate, in their country, the "*Reign of Terror*." "*The Army of England*" was formed, and the all-conquering Buonaparte appointed to the command.

This formidable host seemed, for a time, to threaten the very extinction of the British name; and, from its menacing position, ready to pour on a land devoted to destruction. England beheld the awful preparations with terror and dismay; and, to oppose the flotillas of France, every measure was recommended which the urgency of a moment so important required. The King addressed his Parliament—expressed his fears—warned the country of the danger, and called out, in aid of the regular troops, all the supplementary forces of the nation. But the gigantic mind of Napoleon had contemplated more distant conquests; and while the peaceful inhabitants of Britain trembled for the safety of their homes, and the Powers of Europe in incertitude waited the result, the conqueror of Italy had sailed for Egypt with the

finest army that Europe could boast—and, with the destinies of Britain in his hand, he abandoned Ireland to her fate ! But Ireland was not the theatre of his ambition ; nor a popular government suited to the mind that aimed at unbounded dominion. If his subsequent conduct to Poland may be regarded as illustrative of this feeling, we perceive that while he courted the alliance of despots who betrayed him, he refused to a faithful and magnanimous ally the rank of an independent nation.

The armament for Egypt drained the Republic of money, ships, and stores ; and from that period a withering blight seemed to have fallen on every department where promptitude, energy, and decision should have presided. This may be regarded as the principal cause of the subsequent calamity to which Ireland was reduced. She had received from France the most unequivocal assurances of aid, and her immediate connection with that country was no longer secret. It is true that Government had long been conscious of its existence ; but ministers had subsequently acquired, through the medium of foreign intrigue, more enlarged and circumstantial information ; and the Lord Chancellor asserted in the Irish House of Peers that the negotiations of Lord Malmesbury, the English Ambassador at Lisle, had been defeated ; and all his endeavours to procure a peace with France rendered abortive, through the influence which the envoys from the Irish Union possessed with the Directory of the Republic. But from the Chancellor's petulant disposition, the well-known virulence of his nature, and the proverbial bigotry of a mind restrained by no other limits than its capability of mischief—less general credit was attached to his declaration than perhaps the announcement merited, while some of the more prudent members of administration considered the disclosure intemperate. That the Irish envoys had influence with the Directory is unquestionable ; and it is equally true that the most distinguished officers in the service of France evinced the liveliest zeal in promoting the object of their mission. Hoche, Murat, Bernadotte, Kilmaine, Desaix, and others, were the personal friends of a cause in which they had identified themselves by the exercise of all the influence which the authority of their high names and talents could command. But what does this serve to prove ? That the situation of



Ireland was a subject of deep interest to France, of which the British Minister himself was fully sensible.

As to the more important information which Government had obtained on the internal affairs of the Union, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. In the ordinary system of espionage, which formed a leading feature in the administration of the day, no means were too vile—no intrigues too low—no treachery or deception too base for some of the highest official characters to stoop to. Nor was it considered, at that period, incompatible with the public duties of those officers of the state to intrigue with the lowest and most abandoned of society; and by the allurements of reward, or the threat of punishment, win to political perdition the unfortunate wretch who wanted the courage or the honesty to resist.

The fears, the interests, the ambition of men, were adverted to; and the dastardly being who to preserve a miserable existence became the accuser of others, was less the object of hatred and disgust than he who, in the after days of his country's misfortune, was seen to bask in the sunshine of ministerial favour, obtruding for a time his polluted presence into circles to which his apostacy and corruption had opened him an entrance; but shrinking on recognition from the scowl of public abhorrence.

But when we take into consideration the immense numbers of all classes and of all descriptions which the great and expanded circle of the Union embraced, we view with astonishment the unparalleled fidelity with which men bore every privation and every torture, rather than betray their fellows, or submit to the degrading epithet, "Informer." Few, indeed, were the number who balanced life against infamy; and for one who became the apostate betrayer, hundreds died martyrs to their fidelity.

Things, for some time, had been rapidly approximating to that point where a crisis seemed inevitable. The object of the Irish Government was to hasten—that of the Union Executive to retard; both looked to the movements of France—each had a separate interest to pursue. In this posture of affairs, the strength of the Union declined. The high ardour of the soul had been permitted to cool, and the moment of the noblest excitement was passed.

The interval between the departure of the armament for



Egypt and the commencement of hostilities in Ireland, was too short to afford time for communication between the latter and France. Nor did France at that period, crippled as she was in her naval resources, possess the means of transporting an efficient force from her shores. The "Army of England," or rather the relics of that army, which so lately had spread consternation through the monarchies of Europe, had, in the absence of Buonaparte, been transferred to the command of an illustrious Irishman, "*The brave Kilmaine*."\* But to render this army operative, ships of war, transports, and supplies were wanting, which no efforts of the Directory could provide;—all had been swallowed up in the splendid expedition to swell the triumph of Buonaparte in his Egyptian Campaign.

The demands of Ireland for aid were now urgent and incessant; and her envoys and emigrants indefatigable in their solicitations for prompt relief. Yet, notwithstanding the zeal of the officers in command, and the apparent sincerity of the French Government, a period of nearly three months elapsed, ere the first slender expedition put to sea. Three armaments were prepared, the several arrangements of which were judiciously planned, had they been followed up with the promptitude which the urgency of the moment required. General Humbert, with a small veteran force of 1000 men was stationed at Rochelle. General Hardy, at the head of 3000 troops, was quartered at Brest. And Kilmaine, commanding the main army, 10,000 strong, had taken his position to follow up the embarkation, as circumstances might favour, and to second the operations of both. But while these tardy measures were in progress, Ireland, partially in arms, and unprepared for the combat, was contending single-handed against Britain, with 100,000 disciplined troops in the field.

The Irish Government had watched the progress of coming events, and embraced the moment most favourable to the designs of the British Minister, in his preconcerted plan for the subjugation of our national independence.

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\* This distinguished officer, whose name was Jennings, assumed that of Kilmaine as his *nom de guerre*, on entering the service of France, where his splendid achievements soon procured for him the proud appellation of "*Kilmaine le brave*," and subsequently elevated him to the rank of Commander-in-Chief.

A combination of circumstances had led to an event, which neither the British Cabinet nor the Irish people had originally contemplated—an alliance of the latter with the first-rate power in Europe. This, Ministers, in their infatuated career, seemed never to have calculated on; while they played a game so deep and hazardous, as to risk, on a single cast, the security of Britain, with all her appendages of empire. But if the empire of Britain remained secure, it was neither the wisdom nor the foresight of her Ministers that preserved it. The fallacy of their counsels had drawn her to the brink of ruin. The tyranny of their measures had rendered her connection hateful to Ireland; and the last link in the chain of that connection would, perhaps, have been severed for ever, had not the ambition of Buonaparte directed his course to the East.

I may here repeat an assertion made in the commencement of this narrative, that, whatever might have been the more extended views of individuals, emancipation and reform were the objects originally contemplated by the Union; and that beyond these two specific points, the great body of the people had formed no design. It was on this foundation that the superstructure of that powerful confederacy was raised; and it was the unrelenting despotism of a detested and tyrannical government, deaf to the remonstrance of an oppressed and insulted people, that led Ireland to look for that redress, through the interposition of a foreign power, which, from her domestic rulers, she had solicited in vain.

That great constitutional lawyer, the celebrated Thomas Erskine,\* in debate on Mr. Grey's† motion for Parliamentary Reform,‡ made the following pathetic allusion to the unhappy state of Ireland:—"The identical system," said he, "by which America was lost to Great Britain, Ministers are now acting over again, with regard to Ireland. They refuse to redress her grievances; *they refuse to listen to her complaints.* Let Ministers instantly forego that fatal system of coercion which forced America from her connection into the arms of France, and which is at this very moment driving Ireland to seek the same protection. Let them relinquish the insane

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\* The Honourable Thomas Erskine, afterwards Lord Erskine, and Lord High Chancellor of England.

† The present Earl Grey.

‡ 26th May, 1797.

attempt to retain the affection of that country at the point of the bayonet, which is hourly tearing out of the hearts of Irishmen those feelings of kindness and love for England, upon which the permanence of the union between the two countries can alone be looked to. This fatal system of coercion and terror, which Ministers seem resolved to persevere in, has made half Europe submit to the arms of France. . . . The nations with which she contended had no privileges to fight for, nor any government worth preserving, and they felt, therefore, no sort of interest in their preservation. . . . Take warning from so many examples. The principles of revolution are *eternal and universal*." The warning was not attended to ; and the prophetic fears expressed by Mr. Grey were but too fully verified. "God grant," said that enlightened statesman, "that a convulsion may not happen ; but it can only be prevented by measures of reform and conciliation." But these measures were not suited to the views of the British Cabinet. Coercion continued ! Conciliation was incompatible with the treacherous system of policy which emanated from the counsels of Pitt : and though his object was too palpable to be mistaken, Ireland had not generally contemplated the extent of the evil which he meditated—HER DISMEMBERMENT AS A NATION, AND THE EXTINCTION OF HER INDEPENDENCE.

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## CHAPTER II.

*Consequences of the victory of the Royal Army at Ballynahinch—Situation of Ulster at that eventful period.*

THE decisive victory of the Royal Army over the United Irish forces at Ballynahinch was followed, as already observed, by the total submission of Ulster ; and the hopes which, but a few hours before, had been so highly excited, at once gave place to a general feeling of despondency throughout the province.

Previous to the division under Monroe taking the field, an effort had been made to excite the northern border of Leinster to arms, and rouse the slumbering spirit of the capital into action. But circumstances of a discouraging



nature, and difficult to be contended with, retarded the operation of this measure, which was still held in contemplation, and only abandoned after the disastrous issue of the 13th of June.

The forces immediately under the command of Monroe were drawn, almost exclusively, from the northern districts of Down, the population of which was considered more than sufficient to contend with all the royal troops that could be brought to bear on any point against them. While in the southern districts, from their proximity to the Leinster province, measures were in progress for the organization of a central division, to resist the advance of troops on that quarter from the north, impede the concentration of the enemy's force by intersecting the communication between their several garrison towns, and to aid, as circumstances might require, the insurrectionary movements of the neighbouring counties. This plan, which, if properly acted on, would have embarrassed the Government, and distracted its whole line of military operations in Ulster, was rendered abortive, from the absence of that spirit and energy which alone were wanting to ensure its success. The country was without leaders—the hand of power had removed the most popular and efficient ; and whilst those who should have occupied the stations of the absent, alarmed at the boldness of the undertaking, wanted nerve to embrace it, the sanguinary proclamation of the British General, Nugent, staring them in the face, confirmed their fears. This had been circulated throughout the country, with almost telegraphic despatch ; and that ruthless manifesto, which should have roused the tame and nerved the feeble, chilled the ardour of some whose firmness had not hitherto been suspected. Having proposed such terms and conditions, as men armed against their oppressors must reject with disdain, General Nugent concludes his memorable proclamation in the following words : “Should the above injunctions not be complied with within the time specified, Major General Nugent will proceed to set fire to, and totally destroy, the towns of Killinchy, Killileagh, Ballynahinch, Saintfield, and every cottage and farm-house in the vicinity of those places ; carry off the stock and cattle, and put every one to the sword who may be found in arms. It particularly behoves all the well-affected persons who are now with the Rebels from constraint, and who, it is

known, form a considerable part of their numbers, to exert themselves in having these terms complied with, as it is the only opportunity there will be of rescuing themselves and properties from the indiscriminate vengeance of an army necessarily let loose upon them."

No man has presumed to question this officer's efficiency in firing the peaceful hamlet, or putting the defenceless to the sword—he afforded us a lamentable proof of his prowess in both ; and yet I am disposed to attribute this conduct more to a desire of conforming with the exterminating system of a vengeful Government, than to a natural ferocity of disposition in the commander, who in private life seemed not to be divested of the milder qualities of humanity. In fact, he was considered better suited for the fopperies of the toilet than the thunders of the field ; and it was generally believed, that had he not been aided by the talents of a bold and experienced officer in the eventful action of the 13th, Monroe would have plucked the proudest feather from his plume. The judicious arrangements of the latter on the 11th and 12th of June, created a very general feeling favourable to his success. This was farther strengthened by the prevailing report, I know not on what authority, but I know it prevailed, namely, that General Nugent's instructions were, in the event of his opponent's success, not to hazard a second engagement, nor to fall back on his former station at Belfast, but, retreating in a southerly direction, to evacuate the province. Indeed, had General Nugent encountered what there was strong ground to apprehend—a disastrous issue in his contest with the united forces at Ballinahinch—there was little reason to hope that the British Army could have maintained a position in Ulster, which, in twelve hours after, would have exhibited a hundred thousand men in arms.

Too confident of his success, Monroe imprudently declined the advantage of a night attack, when the licentious and defenceless state of the enemy presented an easy conquest. This fatal feeling of confidence, briefly expressed in a despatch from his camp on the evening of the 12th, "That victory was certain, and the British army within his grasp," was rapidly communicated to the station selected as the rallying point for the central division ; the intelligence created a lively sensation, and gave a momentary impulse to its movements. But while this communication was cheered by



those who looked beyond the advantages of a local victory, it served to encourage a false sentiment of security in others, which eventually led to the disarrangement of the enterprise.

At a period so critical as that of which I now treat (and, however painful the acknowledgment, I cannot in candour forego it), it was difficult to trace, in an extended range of nearly fifteen square miles, a resident leader, possessing popular influence and talents for command, who was willing, on the moment, to run the hazards of the field. On the contrary, men were to be found who had previously plumed themselves on their military rank, but seemed now to be altogether insensible to the responsibility of their situations. Whilst some pleaded exemption from the "unequal contest," others endeavoured to dissuade from the pursuit of a "desperate enterprise" those who placed no peril in competition with the abandonment of their duty. This constituted one of the ills arising from the too minute technicality of organization, especially in the military department of the Union. No military organization can be rendered efficient, save by the practice and discipline of the field. A mere theoretical knowledge in the science of modern warfare avails a people little, in those bold and simultaneous movements, where so much depends on the enthusiasm of the moment. The first erroneous step becomes irretrievable to those who calculate on other means than the ardour of the mind and the force of the nervous arm: while the manly heart, even in the perils of defeat, will rally again for the conflict, often forcing discipline to yield to the powerful impetus of an untrained, but determined foe.

Much stress has been laid on the military organization of Ulster: whereas, in those quarters of Ireland where that system of organization least prevailed, the popular resistance was more prompt, more persevering, and the results more disastrous to the regular armies opposed. A people driven to resistance by the arm of oppression require little artificial means to render them formidable to their tyrants. Give but direction to their movement—share with them the danger and the toil; and with a hated foe and the prospect of freedom before them, they become irresistible as the mountain torrent. It was on this principle of action that the men of Wexford first learnt to triumph, and their subsequent dis-



cipline became easy of acquirement as the rude material of warfare gained confidence by success.

In the wide circle of the populous and intelligent province of Ulster, there were few individuals of higher talent, and none perhaps of superior worth to the venerable and patriotic Samuel Barber.\* This gentleman was one of the first and boldest advocates for the emancipation of his country and the union of all her sons. He was a man mature in wisdom—of hale constitution; and though at this period somewhat advanced in years, he possessed a youthful spirit of enterprise, with a magnitude of mind suited to the boldest designs on the most extended scale of action. I had, in common with my countrymen, a profound respect for his personal and intellectual worth, and I felt honoured by his confidence and friendship. Circumstances, which it is not now necessary to advert to, placed us on the ground of the Central Division on the night of the 12th of June. I hailed the event as the omen of success; and in the enthusiasm of a young and ardent mind, I saluted him, First in command! “Not so,” he exclaimed.—“No!” with peculiar earnestness he added, “the freedom of Ireland depends on the youthful energies of her sons. I am not fitted for the active duties of the field, but I will aid you with my counsel, and second you with my arm; and what a man of sixty years *can* do, I pledge myself to perform.”

Up to this period, no efficient force had been assembled; but as numbers progressively increased, the active arrangements of the moment enlivened the scene, and dispelled all apprehensions as to the future. Two plans of operation were suggested—the one to march direct on Ballynahinch, notwithstanding the communication of Monroe, and thus to render more certain the defeat of the British army within the town. The other, in the anticipation of Monroe’s success, to wait the issue of the night, then press for the important post of Newry; and by extending the insurrectionary movements along the borders of Armagh on Louth—intersecting the direct line of communication between the seat of Govern-

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\* The learned and philanthropic minister of the Presbyterian Congregation of Rathfriland (county of Down). His liberal and enlightened mind is admirably portrayed in his powerful refutation of the calumnious falsehoods so unblushingly sent forth by the Right Rev. Lord Bishop of Cloyne.—*See his inimitable letters to that haughty and intolerant Prelate.*

ment and the Ulster province—ensure the general co-operation of the North. These opinions were advanced and maintained with considerable warmth on either side: it was therefore determined, that the adoption should be referred to the decision of a military council. The council was formed, but the most valuable moments were wasted in discussion. Whilst some pressed for an immediate march on Nugent's position, to secure, beyond the possibility of hazard, a victory which circumstances might still render doubtful; others, from the recent despatches, conceiving that victory as already secure, represented the more important advantage to be obtained by the capture of a garrison town, commanding, from its local situation, the key of the province. The subject was warmly debated, but the latter opinion prevailed. The night was now far advanced, and the remainder was passed in hasty preparations for the morrow; but with to-morrow came the astounding intelligence of Monroe's defeat! Fugitives from his army were the first to announce the disaster; and victory on the part of the royal troops was represented as so decisive, that, in the general panic which succeeded, few were found bold enough to entertain the idea of opposing further resistance. The arms of Britain had triumphed, but never was there a moment more critical to British influence, nor a victory achieved by a more fortuitous event.\* If Monroe's conduct has been censured for the pertinacity with which he opposed a night attack on the army of Nugent in its disorganized state, however we may arraign the judgment, we cannot question the zeal or the courage of the man who sealed with his life his attachment to the liberties of his country.

To the general supineness of Ulster we may trace the easy subjugation of this province; for as a prompt co-operation in popular movements seldom fails of success, a want of concert is uniformly productive of disaster. This proposition was never more truly exemplified than by the result of the insurrectionary movements of the North. Had Antrim and Down acted on the moment, a different issue would have followed their brave but unavailing efforts. The spirit of the

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\* See in detail of the Battle of Ballynahinch, the extraordinary occurrence of two hostile armies—the victors and the vanquished—flying from each other at the same moment.



province would not have been exhausted in partial conflicts; while the whole British army in Ulster would have been placed in more than a doubtful position. But the country was now prostrate; while the victory of the British arms was stained by acts alike abhorrent to every feeling of humanity or justice.

The object of Government was to strike a deep-rooted terror; and, in the exterminating system of vengeance which it pursued, this object was so far achieved, that any hope of recovering the lost ground by a rallying effort, it was considered the height of temerity to entertain. Death now seemed to be courted by those who had been the most forward in the fray, and men mounted the scaffold with a serenity and composure, indicating by their firmness of deportment that life without liberty was not worth the possession. The survivors were, perhaps, the objects of greater pity, with stronger claims on the sympathies of our nature; for while the former embraced death with courage and gloried in their fate, the latter lived but to bewail the misfortunes which severed them from all the heart holds dear.

It were a laborious task to enumerate those who fell victims to a vengeful government, in the unbridled ferocity of a barbarous soldiery. While the heroism with which the proscribed met his fate was a subject of admiration, even to those who were the ready instruments of his torture.

The learned and philosophical Porter, whose genius enlightened and whose eloquence charmed, expiated on the scaffold his uniform attachment to the civil and religious liberties of his unfortunate country. The fate of this highly-gifted individual was one of peculiar interest, and excited more than ordinary regret. He was the very popular minister of the Presbyterian congregation of Grey-Abbey, in the county of Down—a man distinguished in the highest walks of literature, and one of the first philosophical professors of his day. His school was resorted to by the most ardent votaries of science, and the first in rank were proud to be numbered amongst his pupils. His discourses were plain—unostentatious—but adorned with a native simplicity of eloquence which riveted the attention of his auditory. If I have ever derived any pleasure in the pursuit of those delightful theories, I owe it to the early lessons of the eloquent and scientific Porter. Possessing a fund of wit,



with a brilliancy of genius, his writings were luminous, powerful, though often sarcastic. The Government of the day, with their satellities of corruption, were the attracting objects of his unsparing censure or keen-cutting satire, directed as their wickedness or their weakness exposed them to the masterly invective of his chastening pen. These were offences of a nature too deep and serious to be pardoned by those who possessed the power to punish, and the author was marked their victim. The disastrous affair of Ballynahinch involved alike the active and the passive, in the estimation of those who were less alive to the feelings of justice than revenge. Porter was not accused of having borne arms; nor do I believe the accusation could with any plausibility have been supported. His alleged offence was having intercepted a government despatch; and although the bearer of that despatch could not even identify his person, he was arraigned on the testimony of a vile and notorious informer, and condemned by a military tribunal to suffer death! The defence of Porter was manly, temperate, and feeling. While he supported, with becoming firmness, his political principles, he exposed the malicious designs of his persecutors, and in language powerful and impressive remonstrated with the court on the admission of the testimony of the unprincipled wretch who had suborned his life. He breathed no feeling of revenge; but, in the mildest spirit of forbearance, while he consigned his wife and children to the protection of Heaven, he prayed that those of his enemies might never be visited by the afflictions which overwhelmed his own.

In the execution of this estimable man there was a wanton display of cruelty—an exhibition of that brutal and unmanly triumph, which, while it disgusts public feeling, never overawes the brave. The spot selected for the erection of his scaffold was mid-way between his house of public worship and his domestic hearth—and in the view of both—in the centre of that flock by whom he was beloved and admired, he died in the prime of life and vigour of manhood, the victim of public tyranny and personal revenge. In the short period which intervened between his “trial” and execution, his amiable and most exemplary wife procured admission to his prison: with an heroic firmness she attended him in the awful preparations for his death, seeming for the moment to

bury her sorrows in the exercise of those duties which she so faithfully discharged. Having made a brief arrangement of his domestic concerns, the fatal moment was announced, when turning to the fond partner of his affections, "Now, my love," said he, "retire; I will rest at home to-night:" in this he alluded to that which, in those days, was considered an "especial act of grace," and had been conceded to the earnest supplications of his wife—the surrender of the body to the disconsolate survivors.

The residence of the Rev. Mr. Porter was in the immediate vicinity of Mount-Stewart—the splendid mansion of the late Lord Castlereagh. It might perhaps have been conjectured, that an early similarity of feeling had led to an intercourse of friendship. I am not, however, warranted in saying to what extent, or whether any feeling of friendship actually existed. I had no opportunity of any direct communication with my friend and early preceptor from the period of my imprisonment in 1796. It was however, I believe, expected—but vain was the expectation—that in that hour of blood and terror, the shield of protection would have been thrown over the Philosopher and Divine—an act of mercy which would have shed more lustre round the young but apostate aspirant to fame, than all the honours and titles which majesty could confer. Both now sleep in the silent tomb. While the virtues of the one demand the tribute of our praise, the vices of the other claim the charity of our silence.

It will not be uninteresting to the reader to learn something farther respecting the fate of the lamented Porter's family. His excellent wife survived him some years; she lived long enough to instil into the minds of his infant children the principles which their father had maintained, and for which he died—those popular virtues seem hereditary in his sons, who long since were received under the protection of the United States, and hold, at this moment, distinguished situations in the American Republic.

There, also, his friend and co-labourer, Sinclair, enjoys the honours which a free government was proud to confer on talent and worth. This gentleman, at the period of Porter's death, was Presbyterian minister of Newtownards; but torn from his flock and immured in prison, after a long and rigorous confinement he was forced into exile. Ardent in his attachment to the liberties of his country, and zealous in



promoting the union of her people, his labours and example had much influence in dispelling those clouds of bigotry, which ages of despotism had condensed, and in which the modern enemies to her freedom would still desire to see the land enveloped. Liberal and enlightened, his expanded soul was swayed by no sectarian feeling. The purest principles of philanthropy were his guide, and the liberty and happiness of mankind the goal to which the moral energies of his mind were directed.

I could wish to dwell on the merits of these, and the many illustrious Irishmen who perished under this "Reign of Terror." With few exceptions, I knew them—I loved them—and my heart still cherishes the liveliest recollections of their worth: but the bounds which I have prescribed for my narration are too limited to admit an enlarged biography.

In repelling the foul calumnies with which the political views, and even the moral virtues of some of those high-minded individuals have been unsparingly assailed, I can entertain little hope of conciliating the feelings of those men who have been accustomed to designate every act as treasonable and rebellious, when opposed to a system of monopoly and injustice; and to gloss over, under the pretext of expediency, or loyalty to the throne, the barbarous excesses of that unprincipled Government which deluged Ireland in blood—clad her population in mourning—and consigned to death, to torture, or to exile, the best and bravest of our sons! But I write not for their approval. I am independent of their censure or their praise. One amongst the solitary survivors on the wreck of my country's ruin, I will faithfully and fearlessly record the merits and the sufferings of men, whose characters have been basely maligned; and to whose memory, even some of the *soi-disant* patriots of this day yield a reluctant respect. When passion and prejudice shall subside—when reason and justice shall resume their sway—when after ages shall trace the history of the past, and the freedom of man be commensurate with the emancipation of his mind; then will the merits of these men be weighed in the balance of public estimation, and even were it possible that it should vibrate for a moment, the sympathy of their country will turn the scale.

Amongst the number of those who perished on the scaffold at this period, in the province of Ulster, I trace with feelings



of deep regret, the respected name of William Warwick—a young man of much promise, learning, and eloquence. Polished in his manners, imposing in his appearance, with the carriage of the soldier and the ardour of the patriot, he possessed the milder qualities becoming the minister of religion. He had just finished, with high reputation, his collegiate course, and awaited the appointment of his Presbytery to a pastoral charge ; but arrested after the disastrous battle of the 13th, tried by court-martial and consequently condemned, he was executed at the village of Kirkcubbin, exhibiting at its awful close the same loftiness of mind and firmness of soul which had marked his brief and virtuous career.

If we may judge from the number of those who were the early victims of persecution, it is not unreasonable to infer that a more general proscription had been contemplated. Porter paid the penalty of his attachment to his country and the rights of man. Warwick suffered the death of a “traitor,” and with a character so pure, that calumny has not dared to assail it. Acheson,\* the kind-hearted, the generous, and humane, after trial, perils, and unmitigated sufferings, was almost miraculously preserved from public execution through the interposition of an officer of rank and influence. Sinclair, Dickson,† Kilburne,‡ Smyth, Stevelly,§ and others, were long the tenants of the dungeon, or of pestilential prison-ships. Simpson|| and Birch¶ were removed from the tender’s hold, and transported to distant climes, never more to tread the land of their birth ; while M’Mahon,\*\* Gibson,†† and M’Kenny‡‡ fled into exile. All these reverend gentlemen, ministers of the Dissenting communion, dwelt within the compass of a limited district ; and from a central point, the residence of the most distant was not many miles, with the exception of the Rev. Mr. Smyth, who was stationed in a contiguous quarter of the county of Derry—all were of Antrim or of Down.

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* Presbyterian Minister of Glenarm, County Antrim.			
†	“	“	Portaferry, “ Down.
‡	“	“	Belfast, “ Antrim.
§	Covenanter.		
	Presbyterian Minister of Newtownards, Down.		
¶	“	“	Saintfield “ Down.
**	“	“	Holywood, “ Down.
††	Covenanter.		
‡‡	Ditto.		

I have confined my observations to these particular quarters of the country, because I was more familiar with their localities, and intimately acquainted with most of the persons to whom I have adverted. But the hand of persecution did not rest here: it swept in its desolating course the more peaceful districts as well as the more convulsed. Attachment to country was crime; suspicion was guilt; and the mildest penalty incarceration or death.

The venerable Graham sunk in the vale of years, but fresh in the vigour of mind, closed by an untimely fate a life nearly exhausted by the course of nature. In the death of this venerable old man, a double wound was inflicted on his family. His brother, the respectable minister of a dissenting congregation, timid and gentle in his nature, had not strength of nerve to bear up against this domestic calamity, and sank in a short period after, the victim of sorrow and fraternal affection.

It is little matter of surprise, that the learned and enlightened who embraced the cause of Union with every peril and privation for the emancipation of their country, should meet death with that heroic courage which virtue and love of country inspire. But when we behold men in the humbler walks of life, in whom we do not look for that expansion of mind which education and science impart; when we witness men from whom we expect nothing beyond a native or constitutional courage, encounter death with the firmness of the hero and the composure of the sage, we are led to inquire whence this magnanimity proceeds; and we view with admiration that greatness of soul so uniformly characteristic of those who perished at this unhappy period, self-devoted victims for the freedom of their country.

Of this class was the brave and dauntless Armstrong, whose interesting story is so affectingly recorded in the simple and beautiful lays of my late valued friend—the friend of the human race—Edward Rushton, of Liverpool. The scene of Armstrong's trials and his sufferings was the town of Lisburn. The accusation against him was his having borne arms; this was a matter of easy proof, for he admitted the charge. His humble station in life—the awful fate that awaited him—and the unprotected situation of his wife and infant child, encouraged some of those petty tyrants in authority to tamper with his feelings on the threshold of death. A pardon and

protection were offered him, with liberal means for conveying himself and family to any country whither he might choose to emigrate, provided he gave information against certain individuals, whom those political vultures had marked for their prey. Armstrong spurned the offer with disdain ! From the first moment of his captivity, until this, the last hour of his existence, he had not been allowed an interview with his wife, whom he loved with the tenderest affection. He was just about to ascend the fatal scaffold, when this fond partner was permitted to receive his last embrace. It was a final trial of his enemies ! Frantic with grief, and presenting his child in her arms, she implored him with all the energy of affection and the eloquence of despair, to preserve his life—to preserve hers—to protect her from widowhood, and her hapless orphan from ruin. Armstrong, with a bursting heart, but with manly firmness, heard the pathetic appeal of his distracted wife, then calmly replied, “ Ah ! Jane, were I to become a traitor, think how many widows and orphans that would make ! ” The noble sentiment touched her generous soul—she embraced her husband—and, in a paroxysm of anguish, resigned him to his fate.

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### CHAPTER III.

*Proscriptions—Anecdotes illustrative of the Native Generosity of the Irish Peasant—Mountain Scenes—Venality of the Press—Military Devastations—Ingenious Devices of the Peasantry for the Protection of their Families.*

To those who have not witnessed the ills attendant on civil warfare, we can convey but a faint idea of the miseries which Ireland experienced in the sanguinary contest of NINETYEIGHT. While the people retained arms in their hands they felt a confidence—a self-security ;—and the excesses of the legalised marauder, though great, were not always exercised with impunity. It was when popular resistance had ceased that the subdued or defenceless districts experienced the aggregate horrors of military outrage. The thirst for human blood seemed to increase with the facilities for the indulgence of that brutal propensity ; and each



unhappy victim was dragged to torture amidst shrieks of exultation, as if his sufferings alone could expiate the political crimes of his countrymen.

That none of the proscribed should "elude justice," lists of proscription were assiduously circulated; while the vengeance of Government was denounced against those who should shelter or succour the "offender." This was, perhaps, of all acts of tyranny, the most trying to the feelings of a generous-hearted people; and the non-compliance with the inhuman mandate has often involved an innocent household in ruin. When the door of the wealthy mansion was closed, the peasant's cot was sure to afford an asylum to the outlaw, with a trusty guide to conduct him through mountain and morass beyond the reach of his pursuers. I never had cause to regret the confidence I placed—I never experienced an instance of deceit in the humble ranks of my abused fellow-countrymen; though chilling poverty might have been exchanged for wealth, had not the manly heart been too generous to betray. Here I cannot forego presenting the reader with some anecdotes illustrative of that noble quality, which neither domestic tyranny nor foreign mastership could ever eradicate.

The fatal morning of the 13th of June separated friends, never more to meet. Each shifted for his personal safety. Some subsequently fell into the enemy's hands; others were more fortunate in their route. My course was directed towards the mountains on the east. I had travelled by circuitous ways to avoid the enemy's posts, and it was not until the following day I discovered that my course had been traced. My horse now became an incumbrance to me—weak and dispirited from fatigue, he was totally useless in the intricate passes of the mountain, and I abandoned him, but not without regret. The pursuit became more close; I was soon within my enemy's view, and in a little time not very distantly removed from the range of their arms. They quickened their pace, persuaded that escape on my part was impracticable. The ground was uneven which lay between us, and I was lost to their sight for a moment, by a small intervening hillock, which could only cover me from observation so long as the eye was below the level of its surface; but the moment proved fortunate,—I gained the interior of a cabin. I at first hesitated to

enter, from a conviction that it afforded no security, and an apprehension of involving its inhabitants in painful consequences. I cannot conceive what led me to adopt this measure—it was involuntary. I can form no idea now, nor could I then, why I embraced it; neither can I imagine what induced my pursuers to pass without entering. To an all-ruling providence alone I owe my safety. I saw them no more for the present, but I concluded that the respite at farthest could only be momentary.

The neighbourhood was populous, but wretchedly poor, like most of our mountain districts. A number of miserable hovels were scattered around; each of these the military entered in succession. That which afforded me shelter was occupied by a poor woman, with a numerous family of little ones. The Irish heart is proverbially kind, and poverty does not lessen the generosity of its nature. While the children, terrified by the sudden appearance in the neighbourhood of men in red coats and arms, flocked around me, as if for protection; the poor mother, trembling with apprehension, but with a smile expressive of the delight which she felt in the protection her cottage afforded—"Take this," said she, pouring out a measure of whiskey from a *madogue*, or small stone jar, and draining the last drop which the vessel contained—"take this, and may God bless you with it, and may the arm that would harm you never have the power!" I drank to my kind hostess; the reviving liquor did me good, and never did unfortunate wight more require it. The soldiers returning on their search were now within a few yards of the cabin. The poor woman, standing at the door to watch their movements, implored me to conceal myself under the tattered covering of a miserable pallet. "Thank you, my kind friend," I replied, "concealment is now impossible;" and nerving my mind for what I conceived my impending fate, determined not to fall under mercenary bayonets in a hovel, I sprang forward. Unconscious of the advantage the circumstance afforded me, the children, with their mother had crowded the narrow entrance. In this eventful moment the enemy passed by!

I gained, in the course of the night, the steep Sleive Donard, where, free from alarm, I enjoyed a refreshing sleep on the sweet blossomed heath of the mountain. The sun was some time risen before I resumed my route, for I had



tarried for a moment to gaze on a scene the most splendid and imposing in nature. The morning was calm and serene—not a cloud obscured the sky—and the burnished sea beneath this lofty range of mountains, far as the eye could discern to the East, was undisturbed by the slightest agitation of its waters. To the northward lay that portion of the country which had so lately been the theatre of war and the scene of direful conflagration; but from the distant elevation on which I stood, no trace of recent horrors was discernible. I felt myself at this moment as if alone in, and I could have wished forgotten by, the world. Happy, thought I, are they who “rest from their labours,” as I descended from the mountain’s summit, in search of some friendly cottage, and to partake of its homely fare. I soon discovered from the curling smoke, deep and almost perpendicularly below me, a solitary mansion “in the wild”—but it was the “residence of man.” I hastened to approach it, and entered with that confidence of a kind reception which the character of my countrymen inspired. I claimed the rites of hospitality; and requesting a guide to conduct me through the trackless mountain, I sat down to a frugal, but to me a delicious repast.

Fortunately for the innocent peasantry of this secluded quarter, the havoc of war had not yet desolated their dwellings, for their almost inaccessible situation had rendered them secure from military incursions. I proceeded with my guide, to whom every pass of these towering mountains was familiar; and who, faithful to his trust, seemed proud of the confidence I had unhesitatingly reposed. The day was insupportably hot, but we were often obliged to retire to the cavities of the mountain from the scorching rays of the sun. We drank of the pure spring which forms the source of one of our noblest rivers, while my companion entertained me with the legendary tales of this, in the rude traditions of his country, miraculous fountain. I was willing to admit all the wonders which his credulous fancy believed, for to have doubted would have been the extreme of scepticism. I had soon, however, an opportunity of tracing from this apparently slender source, the expanding waters of the dark, deep winding Ban. We had not long descended from the heights, and had proceeded but a short way by the course of the river, when we observed a party of cavalry, with two prisoners, each mounted behind a dragoon. From the extreme heat



of the day my companion and I had taken off our coats, and for some time we walked with them carelessly hung on our arms: but the poor fellow desirous to relieve me, insisted on carrying my burthen, which with his own he folded into the form of a knapsack and slung over his shoulders. This rendered our appearance more remarkable, and we had been discovered in our descent by the dragoons before they were discernible to us. We had already proceeded too far—to turn back or to advance was equally hazardous. We had no alternative but to stem the river. As to myself I felt no apprehension in being able to effect it; but my honest companion being a mountaineer, was not so expert a swimmer. The incumbrance of the knapsack had nearly cost the poor fellow his life, and it was not without some difficulty that I succeeded in extricating him from it. We gained, however, the opposite bank, but with the loss of that portion of our wardrobe. The two prisoners enjoyed our escape; I could hear their cheer of congratulation—the last perhaps they ever uttered. For of the number of prisoners made on the two preceding and following days, few or none, as I was subsequently informed, survived. The dragoons stormed, but they durst not attempt the river. Indeed, the steep banks on either side would have rendered the passage impracticable to horsemen: besides it was a general order, which was issued when Lord Carhampton was commander-in-chief, that no detached dragoons should, under any circumstances, dismount; as on some occasions they had lost their horses and accoutrements, when in the pursuit of fugitives through bog or mountain. And this the noble descendant of Lutterell pronounced “Treachery of the Irish Rebels.”

The loss of our clothes was soon remedied, while the honest fellows who supplied us with a change would not accept any remuneration in return. I merely mention this circumstance as one amongst the many illustrative of the disinterested feeling so often, and in various ways, evinced by those who were proud to testify their attachment to the “friends of their country.” The prisoner immured in his dungeon had his harvest reaped, his lands tilled, and the wants of his family attended to by a kind and generous-hearted peasantry in his absence. Never was political system embraced in so general a bond of harmony and affection; and never were the noble traits of the soul displayed in

brighter colouring than in the ever-memorable UNION OF NINETY-EIGHT.

I parted from my faithful guide soon as the night favoured his return to his solitary mountain, and it was not without some persuasion that I prevailed on him to leave me. Though I had traversed a considerable extent of country, I had gained little way in advance. Every direct line of road was intersected by a military guard. Every village and crossway was under yeomanry *surveillance*. I was now in the immediate neighbourhood of a gentleman with whom, at that period, I had no personal acquaintance, but whose friendship I subsequently enjoyed to the hour of his death ; an excellent man, kind and benevolent almost to a fault. His house was the seat of hospitality, and his heart was the abode of virtue. His family was respectable for its antiquity ; and the excellent qualities of a long line of ancestry were no less conspicuous in the then representative, the late Edward Fegan.

I felt much reluctance in approaching the house of this gentleman, but my situation was extremely painful at the moment. The night had set in, the patrol was under arms, and every cottage in the neighbourhood liable to their intrusion. I was sure of protection under his roof, but the delicacy of his situation increased the embarrassment of my own—he bore arms in the service of the Crown, and I feared to embroil him with the faction of the day. I had taken the precaution of addressing a message to him, leaving him at perfect liberty either to receive or reject my visit. While I awaited his determination I saw a person approach, who, accosting me with much courtesy, desired me to follow him. We proceeded in silence, and passed at some little distance the nocturnal guard which was under arms to relieve the nightly patrol. The hospitable door stood open—we entered. I found a table laid out with abundance, even with a degree of elegance, as unexpected as uncalled for ; but not one soul to receive me. My conductor had left me at the door of the apartment, and I saw him no more. The whole was a perfect scene of romance. A package neatly folded, and directed with the initials of my name, lay on the table ; this contained provisions, more than sufficient for four days. I smiled at the caution my host evinced in my silent reception, but I could not condemn his prudence. I perceived at once his motive. Hospitable by nature, he could not refuse the right



of hospitality to any human being who claimed it ; but highly honourable, and rigidly conscientious in his feelings, he dreaded, perhaps, a subsequent interrogation which might have involved the one or the other. To receive or protect a rebel was an offence not easily pardoned, and the penalty was not likely to be mitigated when the offender was a servant of the Crown. Had my visit been traced, or even suspected, an immediate investigation would have followed, in which he must either have stood self-convicted, or violated that principle of conscience which he valued more than life. Curse on that reign of terror ! many a generous heart fell victim to its severity. Curiosity led me to glance over the columns of a newspaper, which accident or design had placed on an adjoining table. There I traced horrors, chilling to the blood and appalling to the heart. Death marked every line ! Every trial by court-martial terminated with the awful verdict "GUILTY !" while the venal Press of that day sanctioned the foul sentence by its base approval. A list of proscriptions met my eye, inviting by rewards to acts of perjury and blood. I traced the names of many whom I loved ; I saw my own, and perused with feelings of pity and contempt the construction which those servile journals applied to what they technically termed a "Misprision of Treason." They cautioned the generous-hearted Irishman against the very act of humanity which at that moment was being extended in my person towards the unfortunate. Such, then, was the hireling Press of our country, which, but a short time before, had eulogised the Union of Irishmen, cheering the march to freedom.\*

I was unwilling any longer to trespass on the hospitality of a mansion which had afforded me protection during a night of considerable alarm to the neighbourhood. The yeomanry were on the alert ; having no foes to encounter, and, of course, no danger to apprehend, they were little influenced in their

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\* A bold and eloquent writer of that period, in speaking of the Press, observes, "It must be acknowledged that by some fatality of late, the Press in this harrassed country has been either negligent or *apostate* ; it has been a sentinel asleep on its post ; or an *open deserter* ; active against the people and their cause, in the service of which it affected to volunteer. They have seen it introduced to them in all the charms of a virtuous virgin—shortly degenerate and receive the private embraces of the minister behind the curtain ; or act the bolder part of a *public prostitute*."



conduct by any feelings of forbearance. Under the impression that their nocturnal perambulations were over, I prepared to depart. It was grey dawn of morning when I set out, and the same silence prevailed as on my entrance. The first object of importance that arrested my attention was a cavalry detachment proceeding at rapid pace. In a few minutes I could distinctly discern in the ranks a venerable form, with which I was too familiarly acquainted to mistake it. It was that of the revered friend with whom I had parted but a few days before. The sensation I experienced had nearly overpowered my feelings, until urged by the instinct of self-preservation to provide for my personal safety. The morning was clear and unclouded, but the heavy dews of the night were rising in a dense mist from the rich meadows in the valley, which presented the appearance of a vast lake. I had no time for deliberation; I bounded at once into the long floating grass, and there, though the cavalry passed on the very verge of my position, I lay secure from observation.

I now concluded that the days of my friend were numbered, and that a long life of virtue was soon to be terminated by a death of suffering. He was, as I have before observed, in his sixtieth year, and nearly forty had been spent in the ministry of good works. He was the early patron of literature—the associate of Grattan, of Moira, of Flood, and the other illustrious patriots of their day. He lived distinguished by the simplicity of his manners, the purity of his morals, and the illumination of his mind. Early marked by the watchful eye of power, his years, his virtues, and the respect even of his enemies, interposed as a shield to protect him. The arrest of this worthy man had been contemplated in the year of '97; and it was matter of surprise to many that the measure had not been earlier acted on, especially as he resided in the vicinity of Lord Annsley, one of the most active supporters of the unconstitutional measures of an intemperate administration. That noble peer, unlike the accomplished and insidious Castlereagh, possessed little of the internal or external polish of the court. “Your father, madam, is a rebel,” said he, addressing the daughter of Barber; and alike unconscious of the respect due to female delicacy and filial worth, he tauntingly added, “I will commit him to the dungeon.” “If attachment to his country,”

replied the heroic girl, "constitute a rebel, my father is one; and the dungeon, my Lord, is now the seat of honour."

I am happy to add, that my alarms for the safety of my friend proved groundless. After an imprisonment, and an unfeeling display of their authority, he had the supreme good-fortune to escape the malice of his enemies, and to die in the bosom of his family—beloved and regretted by his country.

I could willingly forego a detail of these personal occurrences, which can be but of little interest to the political reader, further than as they tend to the general elucidation of the subject before him, by placing more immediately within his view, the situation of the Ulster province when disarmed and defenceless, and under the absolute control of military force. Had its vast population for one moment contemplated the consequences attendant on its subjugation, they never would have witnessed the ills which they encountered; nor would the Government have possessed the means of inflicting them. Ulster was, at this period, considered as a military school for the exercise of new levies, and the re-establishment of discipline amongst the older troops, whom the veteran Abercromby pronounced sunk in licentiousness. Certainly, so far as regarded the establishment of garrisons—the stationing of posts—the marching and counter-marching of troops—all bore the appearance of discipline and order; or, rather, of a vigilant system of police which it was difficult to evade, but almost impossible to endure.

I had an object in crossing the barrier which the canal forms between the neighbouring counties of Armagh and Down, but the bridges as well as the several locks were guarded. This was a circumstance which I had calculated on. I could not possibly have supposed that the commandant of the district would have omitted a matter which he must have considered so essential. I am perfectly aware that some of his Majesty's general officers have, on occasions, committed errors not altogether creditable to the military character. But this was a measure too evidently essential to have been overlooked, even by the most blundering.

But while the bridges and locks were defended by guards, the intervening levels were left exposed. The passage was attended with neither difficulty nor danger, and I crossed uninterrupted and unobserved. I had proceeded some miles



to the westward, chilled with wet, and somewhat depressed in spirits from fatigue and the cheerless prospect which lay before me. I approached the house of a humble countryman, whose name I can never mention but with feelings of respect. I knocked at the door: the family had retired to rest, but at this period few could indulge in the undisturbed enjoyment of repose. I found it unnecessary to renew my call: whispering voices announced that the inmates were awake, and an expression of alarm proclaimed me an unwelcome visitor. I soon dissipated their fears. I told them I was alone—a friend—in misfortune and wanting shelter. The door was opened with a generous confidence which should have disarmed even an enemy to their peace, and I was received with a courtesy and kindness which would have honoured the master of a nobler mansion.

The residence of Iver Magenis was in a secluded and romantic situation, between the dark lake of Camlagh and the heathy mountain of Belleek; but even here the traces of the enemy were discernible, and though no field had been contested, the country exhibited the ravages of war. The rapine of the ancient Britons, and depredations of the neighbouring yeomanry corps, have entailed a malediction on the despoilers, whose atrocities to this hour are proverbial, and will for ages render their remembrance accursed.

Confidence is the key to the Irish heart. The display of this feeling on my part soon won me the friendship of my host. He was a man of a gay and cheerful disposition; his vivacity was amusing, while he possessed a reflecting, and, in some degree, cultivated mind. Much interested in my situation, nothing was wanting on his part to evince his sincerity, and to facilitate the object I had in view. While he pressed me to sojourn, he was not insensible to the danger of delay; but he would not suffer me to proceed without a guide. I declined his proffered services without wounding his feelings by the refusal; but my friend Iver was not to be dissuaded from the execution of that plan which he in his better judgment had arranged for my greater safety and accommodation. Accompany me he would, at least for one day's journey. The country through which I had to pass, he observed, was in some quarters unfriendly, and its armed yeomanry always prompt for mischief. He would not leave me,—his house might be burnt in his absence, but he would



escort me at all hazards beyond the limits of the county, and place me in friendly hands. He packed up some cakes of oaten bread—ejaculated a short prayer for a prosperous journey, and kissing his little grand-nephew, (for he had never ventured into the holy bands of wedlock,) bade him be a good boy till his return. I had often experienced the disinterested friendship of my countrymen, but it was rare to meet with a man of a more generous disposition, or one apparently less sensible of the personal kindness he conferred. He appeared thoughtful as we set out; when, stopping for a moment, he looked intently on me. His eye seeming first to have measured my dimensions, then his own, with a smile of good-natured pleasantry he observed, "A slender force, but true hearts—no matter, we'll get on." We journeyed together, and though not perfectly free from some little apprehensions in the commencement, we imperceptibly gained confidence as we advanced. We were now joined by a third person, whom it was evident my friend Iver wished to avoid; I felt no desire myself for his company. He was a lank, sanctified-looking personage, covered from the pole of the neck to nearly the instep of the shoe in a shapeless coat of the darkest grey, approximating to sable—a true Cromwellian cut of the evangelico-military order. Iver signified by an expression of countenance which I could not fail to understand that he wished me to proceed. I took the hint, and, with apparent unconcern, continued to gain ground in advance. Having made considerable way, I stopped, and looking back, observed my old companion hastening after me and alone. I returned to meet him: his countenance was cheerful, when, waving his staff with a lively air of satisfaction, and grasping me by the hand, "I knew," said he, "that you would have luck in my company, and yet you would fain have travelled without me this morning. I would as leif," he continued, "have met the ghost of Cromwell as that sanctified fellow I have just parted." "Who is he," said I, "Iver, that has caused you so much excitement?" "Who is he?" rejoined Iver hastily; "why, the devil himself—not to give you a bad answer, he is a Killevey yeoman, and that's enough! He knew you—he said he knew you; but the scoundrel, I think, won't betray you." "He does not know me, Iver," I replied. "He does," rejoined Iver, and with a strong emphasis repeated, "he does; but he would not tell

me where or when he saw you." I immediately recollected my rencontre with some of these guardians of Ireland's peace, when a prudent advice, enforced by the application of a small sum of money, had the effect of composing their dissensions and procuring me a passage, which might otherwise have been attended with difficulty. "The fellow was going to parade," said Iver, "but 'a Prophet met him in the way.'" "I prophecy little good," said I; "we shall soon see the black bonnets on the mountain." "God will not give them the power!" replied Iver, his lively tone of expression changing at once to the grave and reverential. There was a bold and manly frankness in my companion, which, while it rendered him susceptible of kindness, left little room in his mind for suspicion or personal fear. "We will take Ballyargan in our way," said Iver, "and we will not pass by the priest without leaving him our blessing." This familiar expression implied, in the Irish idiom, neither more nor less than that we should partake of the hospitality of the good pastor. "That will lead us too far to the North," I observed. "The very thing I want," replied Iver: "the guards by that time will be set, when we will turn short on the mountain and make Lough Ross by sunrise."

Whilst debating this point we observed, at no great distance before us, some cottages on fire. "It wont do," said Iver, gravely; "it wont do. This is likely to be a troublesome evening: these fellows are in pursuit of some unfortunate men, and they will burn every house suspected of harbouring them. God help the distressed and confound their oppressors!" "Amen," I replied. "And Amen again," exclaimed Iver, with an impassioned tone, extending his arm as if for assault or defence; then laying his hand lightly on my shoulder—"It is a long lane," said he, "that has no turn!" The transitions of feeling are rapid in the Irish breast. They were fully developed in my friend: in a moment he was tranquil. "Come," said he, with the most perfect composure and self-possession,—"come, sir, there is no good in our dallying here. Get up that hill; you can see from it all the country round. I must leave you for a little—I want the advice of a friend—but I will return to you soon." I ascended the height, and beheld, with feelings which I am now unable to express, the full display of that "tenderness of regard—of the mild principles of that con-



ciliatory system," which the British Secretary, Lord Granville, had so highly eulogised, and which a mild and paternal Government had adopted for the "tranquilization of Ireland!" This was no more than pastime to the soldiery. They applied the brand to the thatched roof of the cottage, which soon burst into a flame; and, while the wretched women and children (for I could observe no other inhabitants) bewailed their misfortune, the loud cheer of the incendiaries mocked their distress!

This infernal system of outrage had been carried to such extent, that in some places, whole districts were nearly depopulated. I have known quarters of the country where, at one period, scarcely a male inhabitant was to be found. The wretchedness of their situation forced upon them the adoption of a measure for their general safety and the protection of their families, which evinced an ingenuity in the contrivance, that the direst necessity alone could have called forth. A number of those houseless wanderers, like an Arab tribe, with their wives and children, and any implements which they might have raked out from the ruins of their smouldering walls, congregated on a wild and barren mountain, on the eastern extremity of which lay a spacious bog, which supplied an extensive district of country with fuel. Here, while they appeared most industriously engaged in raising a supply of that necessary material, their whole attention was directed to the formation of dwellings, which they constructed without exciting any suspicion of the design. They cut the turf to the usual size and form; and the excavations, which were deep but narrow, they covered with logs of timber, which the bog produced in abundance. These were then crossed at proper intervals with spars of a lighter scantling, over which they built the turf in the regular form of clamps, but with greater order and solidity, leaving a small aperture in the centre of each, sufficient for the descent of a man to the deep excavation below, but so constructed that this opening or passage was completely concealed from external observation. Here then, entombed in the earth, and never cheered by an enlivening ray of the sun, whole families passed a season in those living sepulchres, which, to their unfeeling oppressors, would have been intolerable for an hour.

A long interval had passed, and my friend Iver had not returned. I was uneasy, impatient, and alarmed lest some



accident had befallen him. The horsemen had scoured the country, and committed great devastation in their route; and, though my own situation was secure, I could not suppress my anxiety for the safety of my honest friend. The evening was closing in around me, and the dying flames from the scattered cottages below, added to the gloomy aspect of a wild and desolated country. My mind was in unison with the scene before me. I could not repress my feelings of horror and indignation.

My impatience momentarily increased, and I had made some progress towards the base of the hill, without forming any conclusion as to the course I should pursue. In this restless state of painful disquietude, I heard the sound of voices a little below me, and in a few moments after I was satisfied of the safety of my long-wished-for companion. Iver had proceeded to Ballyrgan, and returned accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Campbell, pastor of the parish. I had known this worthy man when resident in the town of Belfast, where his virtues and his talents procured him the respect and admiration of every sect. I had not been aware that his pastoral charge embraced that quarter of the country to which untoward circumstances had now directed me, nor had my guide previously designated him by name. I can never forget the sensations with which we met, nor the feeling he evinced, when presenting me with the last token of his remembrance at my departure. We passed some hours on the mountain—all our cares and apprehensions were suspended for the time. Seated on the grass, Iver unpacked a small wallet, which he had borne in his hand, plentifully supplied through the hospitality of the priest. He spread its contents before us, and we did honour to the board. Time passed quickly on, undisturbed by any painful retrospection. My reverend and philosophical friend, sensible that all was lost, was too delicately alive to the personal misfortunes of others to awaken a sorrowful remembrance by adverting to the past. His heart and his home were open to receive me, but I satisfied him that the course which I had resolved to adopt was that which I ought to pursue. It was now time to be gone, but a lingering desire pressed us to remain. "Perhaps," said I, with an assumed cheerfulness, "we may again meet." The expressive countenance of my friend seemed to indicate what he had not the courage to utter. Pressing

my hand in his, "This little token," said he, "will recall to your remembrance a night scene on the mountain." Press it still closer, as if to enforce acceptance, I felt a painful puncture in the palm; and, as he pronounced a blessing, a tear startled in my eye, which I wished rather to attribute to the nervous sensation of pain, than to a weakness of nature that I had not at the moment, perhaps, the firmness to suppress. It was not for some minutes after we parted that I could freely extend my fingers: I then perceived the cause of the pain which the hand of friendship had inflicted. The gift was a pair of small silver knee buckles, of which the worthy man had despoiled himself—the only valuable he had to offer—and a token of remembrance which I still possess, and will retain to the latest hour of my life.

My friend Iver and I had walked some distance before either seemed much disposed to indulge in conversation. The natural vivacity of his disposition, however, soon broke out. "Sorrow," said he, "is a dry companion;" and pulling from the wallet a bottle which contained the residue of the priest's enlivening beverage, "What think you, sir," said he,—"would it not be respectful in us, before we go farther, to take a drop to the health of his reverence?" "A good thought, Iver," said I. "Then God bless him," he rejoined; "and here's to you both." Presenting me with the bottle, "Drink, Sir," said he; "I am sure he'll remember you in his prayers." "I require them, Iver," said I. "And never more than to-night," rejoined Iver: "we have a cursed bad quarter to pass through—no matter, we'll get on—light hearts and gay fellows—a handful of Irish boys, as Marshal Saxe called the brigade."\* We proceeded on, exulting in the "glory of our ancestors," when a surly voice accosted us with the usual challenge—"Who goes there?" "The devil in a wallet," replied Iver, in a merry tone; "will you try him?" "I'll have nothing to do with you or the devil," was the reply. "Pass on." Though confident of our ability to proceed, we evinced no disposition to stop, and the fellow seemed perfectly well inclined to pass us in quiet. "That scoundrel," said Iver, "is going home from the night guard at Cross, and when the blackguard hangs up his

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\* At the memorable battle of Fontenoy, where the Irish Brigade turned the fate of the day.



raddled\* jacket in his sooty cabin, he may sleep all day at the expense of the nation."

As the day began to break upon us, I could perceive that the country through which we passed was, when compared with the more cultivated districts, one of terrific wildness; yet to me it was far from uninteresting. In some parts it was marked by a bold and barren scenery, bleak and irreclaimable mountains rising over mountains, and apparently terminating in the clouds. In others it presented a not less grand, but a more picturesque appearance; exhibiting intervals of verdant spots, fertilized by an almost inconceivable dint of labour, blooming amidst the intervening crags of the mountain, rising in succession from its swelling base, and gradually contracting as they approximated to its summit. Here we find "*unlettered monuments*" that record passages in the history of our country, which those who are interested in it may read. The temple of the ancient Druid may be traced on the sequestered hill. The mound or cairn which covers the ashes of the brave, cannot escape in the valley the observant eye. The sapless trunk of a blighted hawthorn still marks the spot where the foul conspiracy was concocted which consigned the venerable Plunkett† to the block, and hurled from his archiepiscopal seat, a prelate, than whom none was of more exalted virtue amongst those who, in an uninterrupted line of succession from the days of Ireland's apostle, have filled the chair of her illustrious saint. I com-

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\* Raddle is a coarse kind of red paint, with which sheep are marked when purchased in our fairs, to distinguish them from those that have not been sold.

† The truly pious and venerated Oliver Plunkett, Archbishop of Armagh, who, after a long and lingering imprisonment in Dublin, was conveyed to London, where, without preparation, or being permitted to cite evidence in his defence, he was hurried to trial, condemned, and executed on a fabricated charge of high treason. The cruelty and injustice of his sentence was a subject of deep and general abhorrence. He suffered at Tyburn on the 1st of July (O. S.), 1681—his body undergoing the usual ceremony of mutilation. His head was conveyed by his friends to Ireland, and remains to this day in the possession of the religious of the Dominican Order in Drogheda. The virtue and simplicity of this prelate's life require no eulogium. The entire revenues of his see, by his own acknowledgement, did not exceed sixty pounds per annum. His domestic establishment consisted of one servant only; and a small thatched cottage in the wild, in the midst of his oppressed and persecuted flock, was the archiepiscopal palace of the high-born, but meek and humble-minded prelate.



pared the present with the past. I contrasted the immutability of truth with the transiency of power that would impotently dare to subvert it—the virtues of my country with the vices of her oppressors ; and as the involuntary sigh stole from my heart, I felt that truth, expressed in the plaintive melody of our own sweet bard—“ ’Tis treason to love her, and death to defend.”

The sun was up, and we had not reached Lough Ross. “We have lost ground, Iver,” said I. “Not so much either,” he replied. “See that flight of birds—they are rising from the lake.” From this moment I could perceive a change in the animated expression of his countenance. “Where will you be by this time to-morrow?” said Iver, his eye seemingly directed to some distant object. “Where my good or evil fortune may lead me, Iver,” I replied ; “but in every time and place I will remember your kindness.” “It was little I could offer,” he rejoined ; “but we are not going to part yet.” “Yes, Iver, it is time we should part ; you have had a long, a fatiguing journey, and no rest.” “Did I not rest on the mountain?” said he. “Did I not rest when cheerily talking with you ? is not a man always at rest when he is free from care ?” “May spirits like yours, Iver,” said I, “be always free.”

The lake, which was to have formed the boundary of my convoy, lay open before us ; and though it had been for some time in our view, we seemed to gain but slowly on it. Iver was silent—a superficial observer, perhaps, might have thought him sullen. I traced in his silence the feelings of a generous mind ; and I rallied my own spirits to give energy to his. “Stop,” said he gravely, “I did not quit home to part you here, nor to return without leaving you in a friendly quarter,—yonder is the house.” We proceeded slowly towards it. “He is a Magenis too,” said Iver, “and a better man than I am ; but it was not always so. That fellow with his own hand beat seven wreckers from his door, and what is still better,” he added, with a significant nod, “some of them will never find their way back !”

We were crossing a small enclosure which separated the garden from the house, when a blooming girl passed us with a flowing pail of milk on her head. In a moment she disengaged herself from the burthen, and, embracing my old companion with much affection, “Grandfather,” she ex-

claimed, "it is a long time since we saw you!" "It is, my child," said he; "God bless you—go and tell your mother to rouse up and get ready some breakfast for us." "She is up," replied the girl—"we were all up last night!" "I thought as much," said Iver. "There were bad doings here," she added. "The Cross and Craggan men were out. Old O'Neill's house was wrecked, and young Felix was carried off a prisoner; but," with a lively expression she continued. "father says they can't harm him." I could read in this interesting girl's countenance the feelings of a heart ill at ease—the conflicting hopes and fears which in the painful moment of incertitude agitate the soul. We entered the neat and well-trimmed cottage, and were received with that native hospitality, which, as it is the offspring of the heart, requires no parade to render it acceptable. "And the ruffians have been round this quarter?" said Iver. "Yes," replied his kinsman, but without further observation, evidently desirous to avoid the subject, his motive for which was apparent to all save to her who was the most deeply interested in the event. "So you have imposed upon me, my friend Iver," said I: "you are not the crusty old bachelor you pretended to be." Iver's kinsfolk enjoyed the mistake, and laughed heartily at his expense. "He never had the good fortune to be married, sir," said the girl, whom, from her first salutation, I had supposed to be his grandchild. "He never had the luck nor the grace," she continued; and laughing, while she patted the old man on the head, "it is only to remind him, sir, of that misfortune that we call him grandfather." This little pleasantry had the effect of dispelling the gloom, which, but a moment before, had pervaded our circle, and no one enjoyed it more than the kind-hearted Iver himself.

Trivial as the subject may appear, I feel a pleasing, though melancholy remembrance in retracing those rustic scenes. To me they were not without interest. They afforded matter for reflection, and, if properly applied, the improvement of the mind. They served as a school, to which the circumstances of the moment only could have afforded access, for the study of the human character in the display of some of its best and noblest qualities.

Iver had called his kinsman from the cottage to apprise him, as I presumed, of my situation, and to give him the



necessary instructions regarding it, while I remained in conversation with the mother and daughter within. If the female mind is sometimes inquisitive, it is never rude nor offensive, but always kind and sympathising in misfortune. While the innocent girl dwelt upon the subject nearest to her heart, she was delighted to find a stranger interested in a feeling which she had not the art to conceal. If the virgin blush of modesty sometimes tinged her cheek, I appeared insensible of its glow; and when she expressed her fears for the safety of one, doomed, perhaps, never to return, I cheered her with a hope, which my heart in secret prayed might not prove fallacious. "You have had some share too, sir, in these troublesome times," said the good mother, addressing me with a reserve as if doubtful whether the subject were one in which I should wish to be identified. "I have had some share," I replied. "Your mother," she added—"but I make too free—perhaps she is not living?" "She is living," said I, "and will live, I hope, to see the enemies of her country humbled." The name of my mother was as a talisman to my soul, and, had I gained worlds by the suppression, I could not at that moment have restrained the tear, which flowed from the recollection of her sorrows and her virtues. "God help all mothers!" exclaimed my feeling hostess, as Iver and his kinsman approached the door. The eye of the former seemed bent upon me, but the large manly person of his kinsman intervened and concealed me from his view: I saw Iver no more.

"It is time you should get some rest," observed my friendly host; "and I wish we could lodge you better." "Iver," said I, "stands more in need of rest—where is he?" "He has just stepped down to old O'Neill's," was the reply. I was then conducted to the extremity of the cottage, where a slight wooden partition formed an enclosure of limited dimensions, but of neat and orderly arrangement. "Here," said the honest master of the household, "you can sleep quiet and secure;" and closing the door as he left me, added, "Rose and her mother will keep watch for you." I had now no doubt that Iver was gone, and I had little difficulty in accounting for his motive in his abrupt departure: it was easy to discern, under a rough exterior and an affecting insensibility, the better feelings of a generous heart, which the possessor would fain have disguised.



Having passed three nights without rest, I slept the greater part of the day, until aroused by a hasty call, "Lose no time." The alarm was occasioned by the appearance of some yeomanry in the neighbourhood, who were dispersed throughout the valley in small detached parties, two or three men from each seemingly directed to the local observation of each house. This was the system they generally adopted for the prevention of escape, when most intent upon the pursuit of their prey. One of these parties, it appeared, had reconnoitred our little dwelling, and it was on that moment that the wakeful daughter of *Magenis More* had sounded the alarm. The father was a man apparently not of easy excitement, but, from the lively apprehension which the countenance of both wife and daughter betrayed, it was evident they expected the burst of a fearful storm. "They will not have it without a struggle!" said he, addressing me in a calm but determined tone. Resistance was the first impulse of his manly mind, but resistance was not now called for. The party evinced no disposition to intrude upon us; and we saw them deliberately proceeding in the direction of a house at some distance. "They are gone," said Magenis—" *Agus Diobhal Duit!*"

Whether those fellows were unwilling to rouse the resentment of a man of peaceful habits, but of well-known determined boldness; or whether some wished to court his friendship, while they feared his hostility, none of the neighbouring yeomanry had so far molested the dwelling of *Magenis More*.

In that immediate quarter of the country no regular troops had been stationed; and it was sometimes the policy of the resident "guardians of its peace," to exercise a forbearance towards those for whom, if they did not feel, they considered it prudent to feign a respect. Little under the influence of discipline or control, the authority of superiors was often made subservient to the caprice of individuals, each considering himself, at that period, the arbiter of the life and fortune of his neighbour.

In a little time we learned the cause of the unlooked-for visitation, which had been the subject of so much concern to the peaceful household whose hospitality I then enjoyed. During the outrage of the preceding night, some young fellows of the neighbourhood, of bolder spirit than the rest, had attempted to rescue O'Neill's little property from destruc-

tion, and his son from the hands of midnight ruffians. Blows were exchanged in the struggle, and some casualties occurred on either side, though not of a serious nature. On a muster of the yeomanry in the morning, it appeared that some arms and accoutrements had been lost, and to recover these, a party was despatched to the recent scene of action, who, after a diligent but a fruitless search, returned to their cheerless quarters.

I have occupied much of the reader's time, and perhaps exhausted his patience, by a lengthened relation of these personal occurrences, which I have, almost imperceptibly, been led into, from the nature of the subject before me. I shall, therefore, turn to the more important and imposing scenes which that quarter of Ireland presented, where the spirit of the people unsubdued still resisted the arms of their oppressors.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### *Lord Edward Fitzgerald—Irish Militia.*

THE irreparable injury which the Union sustained by the death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald became hourly more apparent as the warfare in Leinster extended. Had he lived to erect the standard in his native province, his presence alone would have inspired a general confidence, and concentrated under his supreme command the physical force of its population; which, acting under different leaders, and in many instances independent of each other, was defective in that power, which, if combined under the guidance of his masterly mind, would have been rendered irresistible.

The military talents—the ardent zeal—the devoted patriotism of this illustrious Irishman, fitted him, above all others, for the important duties of command; while the confidence, the attachment, and congeniality of feeling, which subsisted between him and his admiring countrymen, would have given an impetus to their movements which no British force amongst us would have been able to control. Had Dublin fallen into his hands, of which little doubt could be entertained, and a provisional government been established in the moment of success, whatever might have been the



future efforts of Britain, for the present her internal influence must have ceased. Many of her partisans at that period, balancing between the conflicting powers, were ready to acknowledge an allegiance to the people or the crown, as the dominion of the one or the other should prevail. I saw enough of this vacillating disposition to convince me how slight are the bonds which bind the self-interested to the sinking fortunes of the great. Were I disposed to exhibit the weakness of some, who should, at least, have possessed the delicacy of refraining from an unmanly exultation in the misfortunes of their fellow-countrymen, I could tinge the pallid cheek with the blush of shame, if the last trace of moral feeling be not extinct in their souls.

When the country was strong and the popular feeling elate, men were to be found, who, without the courage to declare their sentiments publicly, or the firmness to protest openly against the abuses of the state, had the policy to court the interest of a people whom they feared, without incurring the suspicions of a Government which they despised. They freely contributed their quota for the purchase of arms, or the defence of the prisoner under the mockery of trial; and they afterwards halloo'd, amidst the blood-hounds of war, when their disarmed and defenceless fellow-countrymen became the objects of pursuit. With these men, success alone constituted the justice of the cause, while the unpardonable crime of the unfortunate was an inflexible love of freedom.

When we turn back to the eventful period of NINETY-EIGHT, we behold with astonishment the powerful and often successful efforts of undisciplined men, opposed to regular troops under officers of experience and acknowledged capability for command. When we consider the order, the arrangement, and the abundant supplies of the one—the deficiency of arms, the paucity of leaders, and the unprovided state of the other—an open and defenceless country to these—garrisons, posts, and encampments in the possession of those, with an active Government, prompt in the supply of all their wants and obedient to all their wishes—we must admit that, in a military point of view, the advantages were not equally balanced. But the quick and discerning mind of Lord Edward had foreseen all this; and even the very privations which the less ardent would have regarded as disastrous to the people's cause, the enthusiasm of his nature would have ren-



dered auxiliary to their success. His enterprising spirit was neither to be daunted by perils nor subdued by toils ; but while ready to co-operate in the boldest measures of his countrymen, the milder feelings of humanity were never estranged from his breast. His gentleness of disposition was discernible on all occasions ; it formed a leading feature in a character in which no man could be deceived. The generosity of his nature, and the confidence which he placed in the forbearance of others, were forcibly displayed on the following occasion.

In the spring of 1797, the situation of the country was critical, and it was considered desirable that an interview should take place between some of the state prisoners from Ulster and certain influential characters deputed by the provinces of Leinster and Connaught. The meeting took place in the prison at Kilmainham. It could not be effected without some difficulty, and address on the part of the gentlemen who composed the deputation ; but these were times when greater difficulties had to be surmounted. In the course of our interview, we learnt that the first link between the army and the people had been broken. Four men, private soldiers in a northern regiment of militia, had been shot in the camp of Blaris Moor, by sentence of court-martial, for subscribing to the test of Union. The names of the sufferers were Daniel Gillan, Owen M'Kenna, William M'Kenna, and Peter M'Carron. This was the first important blow which the National Confederacy sustained.

A great proportion of the militia regiments in camp had embraced the bond of Union. The defection extended to the garrison towns, and the troops stationed in the capital made little secret of their attachment to the common cause of their countrymen ! They, in fact, made a tender of their services ! This was a most important crisis ; but the advantages which the measure presented were not embraced ; timid counsels prevailed ; and the hourly arrival of additional forces from England, enabled the Government to intermix a great majority of foreign with the national soldiery. From this period the prison guard was never trusted exclusively to Irish troops.\*

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\* About this time, four grenadiers of the Regiment of —, which had been raised in my own province, came to the prison of Kilmainham and requested permission to see me. They were going home on furlough, they said, and would be glad to acquaint any of my family whom

The fate of the four men who perished at Blaris Moor created a general feeling of sympathy, but produced no other effect; and the consequence, as every reflecting mind must have foreseen, was the decline of that confidence which the army had reposed in the firmness and co-operation of the people. Had the execution of the sentence been opposed by any formidable show of popular resistance, the 16th of May, 1797, would in all probability have formed one of the most important epochs in the annals of Ireland.

The courage and magnanimity displayed by these unfortunate men rendered their fate a subject of still deeper regret. They had been selected from a large portion of their fellow-soldiers, equally implicated with themselves, and life and immunity had been offered to them, but on conditions which they disdained to accept. The father of the M'Kennas had travelled from a remote quarter of the province (Monaghan) to be present at the trial of his sons in the town of Belfast. When no importunities could extort from them any information, he was solicited to exhort his sons to a confession, for the preservation of their lives. The reply of the old man was bold and pathetic. "I can bear," said he, "to see my sons die, but not to live traitors and slaves in the land of their birth!" and with a firm step and composed demeanour, he accompanied them to the fatal field of execution.

As Lord Edward described to us this affecting scene, the tear rolled from his eye, while, with impassioned emphasis, he exclaimed, "Were I M'Kenna, I would not barter the sterling virtue of his noble soul for all the tinselled honours which the highest hand of power could confer."

Our interview was interrupted by the unwelcome announcement that the Rev. Mr. Archer, Inspector-general of prisons, and an officer of the courts were below. This was somewhat embarrassing. It was understood that the state prisoners were kept as much as possible apart, and by all means

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they might meet, that they had seen me in good health and spirits. The request did not appear unreasonable, and the principal turnkey had the good nature to admit them to my apartment. I was surprised at their entrance, but still more at the subject of their visit. "We come, sir," said they, "from our Regiment. It is stationed in the Royal Barracks. Send at any time you may want our assistance, to the Palatine Square, and the doors of this prison will soon fly open."



excluded from external intercourse ; but as the price of the indulgence which we occasionally enjoyed was the perquisite of the Governor's lady, it was no less her interest than ours to guard against surprise. We were immediately locked up in our separate apartments ; our visitors, four in number, having been severally distributed amongst us. The arrangement was the work of a moment, and in the hurry, it was my good fortune to have the company of Lord Edward. We had now no further cause for uneasiness. The jailor was absent—at the castle, the transport ship, or where the avocations of his high office might have led him ; and from his peculiar attention to the safe keeping of the state prisoners, it was not to be supposed that any one could possibly have access to them in his absence. Such was the internal arrangement of our *domicile*, when a good understanding prevailed betwixt the Governor and his household ; and though this was sometimes interrupted by an assumed air of consequence, or a fretful feeling of caprice, he generally found it his interest to stand well with his establishment.

Our friends remained restricted in their liberty longer than they had calculated on. The inspector and his companion had full time to visit every quarter of the spacious prison ; but that which they were most desirous to enter, they were prudently excluded from. The Governor had not returned. At length, impatient of delay, they retired. The circumstance of their arrival afforded me the gratification of a long and interesting conversation with the noble companion of my cell. From him I learned some particulars which I was deeply interested to ascertain—the situation of my eldest brother. He was the dear-loved friend of the gallant Edward, and an enthusiastic votary to the freedom of his country. But I shall have occasion hereafter to speak of him more at large.

● In descanting on those subjects which the situation of the country naturally gave rise to, I expressed some concern, lest, in the overwhelming torrent of popular reaction, when the angry passions of men, roused by atrocities well calculated to promote retaliation, the milder feelings of mercy might, for a moment, give place to those of retributive justice. I touched on scenes which I presumed Lord Edward himself had witnessed in the frenzied population of a neighbouring capital—of a country too, distinguished through ages for the noble and chivalrous character of its people ; and I dwelt



with pride on the glory which our cause would acquire from the exercise of a generous forbearance and a magnanimous oblivion of the past. "Unprovoked," replied Lord Edward, "as have been the aggressions of the enemy, and unexampled the tyranny which has been exercised over a too patient and long-suffering people, the Union of Irishmen will never be sullied by acts unworthy of a brave and generous-hearted nation. No! The minds of our countrymen are imbued with sentiments of religion, too deeply and generally impressed not to prove a restraint on the most turbulent in the highest moment of excitement! We will have no reprisals! Give me," said he, "the bold, the noble-minded peasantry of Ireland, with all their follies and their frailties to boot; and whether in the hour of victory or defeat, confident I am that they will exercise a clemency and forbearance, which no people under heaven, similarly circumstanced, was ever known to practise!"

Such were the sentiments of this illustrious chief, and such was the confidence he placed in the moral virtues of his countrymen. Had it been their fortune to have hailed him in arms in the field, instead of to mourn his untimely fate in a dungeon, Leinster, united under his standard, would have formed a phalanx not easy to be broken.

I have digressed too far. But feelings which press upon me—early remembrances—and a variety of incidents forming links in the chain of my narration, render it difficult to proceed in that undeviating line which I should otherwise be disposed to follow.

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## CHAPTER V.

*Cavalry defeat on Kilcullen Green—Treaty with General Dundas—Massacre on the Curragh of Kildare—Battle of New Ross—Massacre of Scullabogue—Proclamation from the United Army—Manifesto of the British General commanding in the Southern District—Arrangement of Forces—Battle of Arklow.*

THE conflicts which took place in Leinster, prior and subsequent to the suppression of the Ulster province, though many and sanguinary, had not as yet led to any decisive

result. Naas, Kilcullen, Kildare, Hacketstown, Prosperous, and many places to the southward, were at intervals the scene of action. But Wexford maintained a regular system of warfare, and, even in the bustle of arms, proceeded to the organization of its Civil Government.

The isolated situation of this county left it entirely dependent on its own resources. Its inhabitants, unaided and unsupported, fought single-handed against invading armies; and, at one period, we find no less than twelve British generals opposed to them in the field.

Kildare, from its local position, being the direct line of intercourse between the capital and the south, was a point of the first importance, either to the Royal or the Insurgent troops. This ground was warmly contested. With the exception of Wexford, no other county in Ireland produced so efficient a force as the county of Kildare. Here, though Aylmer was commander-in-chief, some detached forces in the commencement of the campaign acted under leaders independent of his authority. Had these, as we have already observed, been concentrated under one chief—had the lamented Lord Edward Fitzgerald taken the field, Kildare alone would have overawed the capital; and, with Wicklow and Wexford in arms, constrained the garrison of Dublin to surrender or evacuate the province.

It was amazing with what facility the hitherto peaceful peasantry of this country acquired a technical knowledge of warfare, a confidence, and discipline in arms. Cavalry, which generally inspires the multitude with terror, soon ceased to be regarded with alarm. The signal defeat of a body of British dragoons at Kilcullen Green, exhibited the inefficacy of that force when opposed to the deadly resistance of the pike. General Dundas, though a brave and experienced officer, had not, perhaps, an earlier opportunity of witnessing the effects of this formidable weapon. Impatient to dislodge a body of pikemen, advantageously posted on an eminence, which forms the southern boundary of Kilcullen Green, he ordered his cavalry to charge. The charge was made with that promptitude and boldness which became the gallant officer who led it on, and was repelled with no less firmness. The cavalry, twice repulsed, were a third time ordered to the attack. The intrepid leader, who saw the rashness of the measure, expostulated with General Dundas on the

temerity of the attempt; but the order was peremptory. The charge was made in gallant style, and sustained with the most inflexible firmness. The brave commander fell, and scarcely one of his followers survived the slaughter.

Wherever the popular forces were under bold and determined leaders, they seldom betrayed a want of firmness; but when officers were deficient in these qualities, we find the troops on some occasions influenced by their weakness, and constrained to treat with the enemy. A division to the amount of more than 2000 men, negotiated to surrender with the British general, Dundas. The terms of the surrender were the abandonment of their arms, with permission to return unmolested to their homes. To these conditions the British General prudently acceded, and the division retired from the field.

A few days after this occurrence, another division having stipulated for similar terms, confiding in the faith of General Dundas, repaired by appointment to the Curragh of Kildare, to make their surrender and receive his protection. While waiting the arrival of Dundas, they were attacked by the army under General Sir James Duff, on its march from the south, and in their open and defenceless position, slaughtered without mercy. Many who had escaped the fire of the infantry fell under the sabres of the dragoons, and the green plains of the Curragh were saturated with the blood of defenceless victims! *Lord Jocelyn's* encible cavalry had to boast the honour of this exploit!

In this foul and murderous transaction General Dundas stands free from imputation. He was a soldier and a man of honour, and he evinced his deep and marked abhorrence of the base and sanguinary deed. But the legislature of Ireland expressed a different feeling. The thanks of our VIRTUOUS PARLIAMENT were almost unanimously voted to General Sir James Duff; while the humane Dundas experienced, if not the direct, the implied censure of the "Honourable House."\*

Whatever influence General Dundas might have acquired

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\* Mr. John Claudius Beresford "considered the circumstance of General Dundas's treating with and receiving ambassadors from 4000 rebels, with arms in their hands, a species of conduct which called for the most serious investigation, and such as the House should not on any pretence, be induced to overlook."—*Irish Parliamentary Debates*, 1798



by his humane policy in restoring tranquillity to the district under his immediate command, the massacre of Kildare was not calculated to improve feelings of confidence, or to inspire sentiments of trust in British faith.

The place selected for the ratification of the treaty with General Dundas, and which subsequently became the scene of blood, was one which afforded the unfortunate sufferers neither the means of defence from assault, nor of escape from pursuit. It was an open extended plain, unbroken by any enclosure which might serve to intercept the cavalry in the charge, or to check the infantry in their advance. It was further remarkable from its proximity to a quarter celebrated in the earlier days of Ireland's misfortunes for a public breach of faith, when the best blood of Leinster was shed by one of the basest acts of perfidy which the annals of treachery record.\*

It is not surprising that no confidence was now placed in British protection, and that the people preferred the security of arms to the faith of their enemies. From this period we hear little more of surrenders ; affairs assumed a new aspect ; and war was carried on with the most inveterate hostility on both sides.

The battle of New Ross, which was fought a few days after, on the 5th June, was perhaps the most obstinate of the whole campaign. The occupation of this town was a matter of much consequence. Situated a little to the southward of the junction of the two great rivers, the Barrow and the Nore, which bound the county of Wexford on the west, New Ross opens a direct line of communication to the wealthy counties of Waterford and Kilkenny. The value of this important station was not overlooked by either army, but it was now in the occupation of the British, and under the command of Major-General Johnston. The garrison of New Ross had been strengthened by considerable reinforcements,

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\* The Rathmore, or large fort of Mulloghmaston, a few miles southward of the Curragh of Kildare. There the Irish had been invited by public proclamation, and under solemn assurance of safety, to an interview with the English, in the reign of Elizabeth, 1577. The chiefs of Leinster assembled ; and in full confidence, under the honourable feeling of men, who, incapable of treachery themselves, never suspected it in others, they entered the fort, from which a single soul never returned. They were surrounded by several lines of horse and foot, and literally hewn to pieces.—*See Irish Annals of Queen Elizabeth's reign.*

and every necessary supply for enabling it to resist the enemy.

The United army, under the command of Beauchamp Bagnal Harvey, marched from their encampment on the evening of the 4th June, and without opposition took post on an eminence about one mile south-east of the town. The British army remained under arms during the night; and Harvey, who had ordered the attack to be made at break of day, summoned the garrison to surrender. His despatch to General Johnston, dated "Camp at Corbet Hill, half-past three o'clock in the morning," was forwarded by a flag of truce; but the bearer, Mr. Furlong, as he approached the town, was fired on from the garrison and fell. This gentleman stood high in the estimation of the popular army; and the atrocious act, which was viewed by a division of the United forces from the hill, aroused in them the most ungovernable feelings of resentment. They could no longer be restrained; they rushed to instant revenge; and thus the plan of attack which Harvey had arranged with much judgement was frustrated.

This division, which occupied the station nearest to the town, poured like a torrent from the height, driving all opposition before it. It dislodged in a moment the outer lines of defence, breaking through cavalry, infantry, and artillery; and, turning the British cannon on the flying troops, entered the town with the broken and disorderly ranks of the enemy. Here following up their success, they pressed the principal force of the garrison from post to post, until they eventually succeeded in driving them across the river Barrow.

Whilst the first division of Harvey's army carried slaughter and dismay in its advance, a second division, panic-struck, had retreated from the hill, without either firing a musket or brandishing a pike. The want of firmness in its leader communicated fears to the men, and the contagion had spread too far to be remedied. The brunt of the action was chiefly sustained by the first division, which derived little efficient aid from the others.

Harvey's original plan of attack was by three divisions on three several points at the same moment; and had this plan been carried into effect, we may form an opinion from the successful operations of the one, what the combined exertions of all would have produced. Or had the prudence of the



United troops in the hour of victory equalled their courage in the contest, the battle of New Ross would, in all probability, have terminated the Wexford campaign. But having succeeded in driving the enemy from almost every point, and after triumphing in every quarter where contending arms came in contact, they lost through a degrading intemperance the victory which their valour had achieved ; and though not vanquished, they were eventually repulsed.

The defeat of the Royal army had been considered so conclusive, that some of the officers, foregoing all idea of further resistance, precipitately fled, not conceiving their persons secure until they had reached the city of Waterford in their flight. But the United forces, so far from pursuing the advantage they had gained, abandoned themselves to the enjoyment of intoxicating liquors, from which all the remonstrances of General Harvey and his officers could not induce them to abstain. In the meantime, General Johnston used every method to rally his discomfited troops and renew the combat.

Lord Mountjoy, commander of the Dublin regiment of Militia, had fallen early in the action. This officer was much esteemed by his men—indeed, highly respected by his country. A warm appeal from the British general to the feelings of that corps produced the desired effect ; it was the first to rally. The example of this regiment influenced others, and in a little time General Johnston, at the head of a formidable force, in his turn assailed the town. The resistance opposed to his entrance was no more than the feeble effort of intoxicated men, and the troops of Harvey fled !

Recovering from their panic, and the more unmanly state of inebriation which had given the enemy an easy victory, ashamed of their defeat, and rallied by their leaders, who, burning with indignation, upbraided them with their unsoldierlike conduct, they again returned to the charge. The encounter was bloody, and the battle was now contested with the most determined courage on each side. The artillery, which was plied with deadly effect, made dreadful havoc in the United ranks ; while the men of Wexford, fearless of the consequences, charged home to the cannon, piked the cannoniers, and embracing with a species of maddened enthusiasm the engines of death, bore them off in triumph with shouts of exultation. Again the British troops were driven



from the town ; and the same fatal consequence as before now followed, in fresh libations to victory.

Rallied a second time, the British army returned to the assault and were again victorious. A third time they were assailed with a courage and impetuosity becoming the fury of despair. The town, fired in many parts, exhibited a scene which threatened a general conflagration, while the contending parties fought hand to hand amidst the flames.

Thirty infantry soldiers breaking off in a body from their division, precipitated themselves on the United line. Their object was to form in the ranks with their countrymen, who, in the heat of the action, and enveloped in smoke, mistook the movement for a charge, and piked them to a man. This fatal occurrence, in all probability, prevented the junction of others. The heavy cannon had been rendered, in a great degree, unserviceable to the British army. But their light curricule guns, in the alternate change and shifting of ground, told with powerful effect. In a last desperate effort to carry these, Kelly, the gallant officer who led the charge, was wounded at the head of his band, and borne off in the arms of his companions. A retreat was now sounded, and the United forces retired from the town.

This was decidedly the hardest fought action in which the United troops had yet been engaged. It continued with little intermission for ten hours, commencing at four o'clock in the morning, and not terminating until two at noon.

The British army evinced no disposition to pursue the enemy, who, on retiring from the town, encamped at Carrick Byrne, a position within a few miles of the garrison of New Ross. But ample vengeance was taken by the British troops on the unfortunate individuals who unhappily fell into their hands. No quarter was given them ; and many of the inhabitants whose houses had been fired in the action, and who were now exposed in the streets, were shot or bayoneted without mercy. No man was spared who was not dressed in military costume ; all others fell victims to the brutal rage of the soldiery. The massacre continued the following day, when such of the unhappy wretches as had procured shelter during the night, were dragged from their lurking-places to instant death ; while in other quarters, houses crowded with these defenceless victims, were set on fire, and none being

suffered to depart, every human being within perished in the flames.

Savage warfare of extermination ! and in the last degree disgraceful to the authority that possessed the power, without exercising it, for the suppression of those brutal outrages. Not less disgusting was the inhuman scene at Scullabogue ! The heart sickens at the recital of those atrocities, which cause man to blush for that depravity in his fellow-creature which degrades him below the level with the brute.

I have selected the following lengthened report, *verbatim*, from "Hay's History of the Insurrection of the County of Wexford." It corresponds with the verbal communications I have had with the author, the late Mr. Edward Hay, on this subject, and presents, I fear, but too faithful a picture of that direful transaction.

"It is an invariable maxim," observes Mr. Hay, "that cowardice and cruelty are very closely allied. This was most strongly exemplified by the barbarous conduct of the runaway murderers who fled from the battle of Ross to Scullabogue, where a number of prisoners were confined in a barn, to which these savage miscreants (having overpowered the guards, who resisted them as long as they could) set fire, and made every person within its walls, nearly eighty in number, perish in the flames. One hundred and eighty-four are confidently asserted to have been victims on this occasion, besides thirty-seven shot and piked; but then the same account states, that the barn was in dimensions only thirty-four feet long and fifteen feet wide; and it is not, therefore, within the limit of reasonable probability that there were so many, as they would have been so closely crammed in, that the cruelty of such confinement could not escape notice; indeed, in such cases they could scarcely stand together and respire. I am, therefore, led to believe, that the assertors of these statements have been imposed upon, as eighty persons would rather crowd such a space too much for the purposes of maintaining life and health; and I am consequently induced the more readily to think the information more correct with which I have been favoured by respectable and disinterested authority, from the neighbourhood in which the nefarious transaction took place; and surely it must prove grateful to every mind to be so agreeably undeceived respecting the fewer number of victims. Wickedness is seldom exhibited only in single acts of depravity; it scarcely ever omits exerting every possible action of baseness. Such of the victims at Scullabogue as had anything about them worth taking, were plundered before being consigned to their horrible fate. It is alleged, on the part



of the sanguinary ruffians concerned in this most detestable transaction, that it was in retaliation for like deeds of desperate cruelty practised against themselves, and irritated as they were from recent experience of persecutions and tortures of every kind—whippings, strangulations, and hangings without trial—which some of the party had narrowly escaped a few days before in Ross, where these measures were very prevalent;—but no incentive, no persecution, no experience of cruelty can palliate, much less excuse such unnatural and detestable atrocity. It is but justice, however, to observe, that in this horrid transaction, no person of superior condition—none above the mere *canaille*, or lowest description of men was at all concerned, however confidently the contrary has been asserted; but infamy of this indelible nature should never so much as glance but at its proper objects. Were the fact otherwise than as here stated, it must have been notoriously manifested in the course of the several trials since had in consequence of the very enormity, and for which some miscreants have been justly doomed to execution. But truth imposes the task of mentioning also, that it has appeared from solemn evidence given on those trials, that in consequence of the insurgents being disappointed in their expectation of taking quiet possession of Ross, their flag of truce being shot, and after the attack, the fugitives from the town communicating accounts of the tortures practised there, and that no quarter would be given to the people, an infuriate multitude of men and women rushed to Scullabogue vociferating revenge, forced the guards (who did all in their power to protect their charge), and set fire to the prison, which was a thatched house; and for this transaction General Johnson has not escaped animadversion, as it is said he was repeatedly warned to spare the people, or they would resort to retaliation by executing all the prisoners in their hands; and if giving quarter would have prevented the fatality at Scullabogue, humanity excites a wish it had been given. It is material to observe also, that these trials have disclosed information manifesting a very strong feature characteristic of popular commotion, which is, that the unbridled multitude are as precipitate as indiscriminate in their deeds of outrage, putting them into execution as soon as conceived, to prevent the possibility of counteraction. This is, in fact, so true, that very often the greatest favourites cannot escape the instantaneous violence of popular fury. Although this cannot be considered as an excuse, nothing being capable of palliating, much less excusing the crime at Scullabogue, yet its guilt would be greatly aggravated did it appear a deliberate or premeditated action, in which any one above the meanest vulgar was concerned. To counteract the reports of religious intolerance, it must be stated that fifteen or sixteen Catholics shared in the sorrowful catastrophe of Scullabogue, whence only two Protestants, and no



Catholic, providentially escaped.”—*Hay’s Insurrection of the County Wexford, pp. 156-159.*

Soon as Harvey and his officers were apprised of this lamentable occurrence, a deep feeling of horror was universally expressed, and a proclamation immediately issued by the Commander-in-chief, concluding with these words—

*“Any person or persons who shall take upon them to kill or murder any person or prisoner; burn any house, or commit any plunder, without special written orders from the Commander-in-chief, shall suffer death.—By order of*

*“B. B. HARVEY, Commander-in-chief.*

*“F. BREEN, Adj.-Gen.*

*“Head-Quarters, Carrick-Byrne Camp,  
June 6, 1798.”*

On the following day, the United Irish General, Roche, addressed from Wexford a similar proclamation to his countrymen and fellow-soldiers. Having praised their exertions in the cause of their country, he calls upon them to secure the conquests they have won, by an implicit obedience to the commands of their chiefs, and adds—

“At this eventful period, all Europe must admire, and posterity will read with astonishment, the heroic acts achieved by a people strangers to military tactics, and having few professional commanders. But what power can resist men *fighting for liberty!*

“In the moment of triumph, my countrymen, let not your victories be tarnished with any wanton act of cruelty. Many of those unfortunate men, now in prison, were not our enemies from principle; most of them, compelled by necessity, were obliged to oppose you. . . .

“To promote a union of brotherhood and affection among our countrymen, of all religious persuasions, has been our principal object. *We have sworn in the most solemn manner—we have associated for this laudable purpose, and no power on earth shall shake our resolution.*

“EDWARD ROCHE.

*“Wexford, June 7, 1798.”*

Let these proclamations be placed in juxtaposition with those of the British generals commanding his Majesty’s forces in Ireland; and the manly declarations of the one be contrasted with the vengeful denunciations of the other.

I have already given some extracts from the public orders of a British general in the north; I now copy the following

from those which were issued by a district general in the south, bearing date, Cork, the 7th of May, 1798, and prior to the commencement of hostilities:—

“Whereas it has been reported to Lieut.-General Sir James Stewart, that in some parts of the country where it has been necessary to station troops, at *free quarters, for the restoration of public tranquillity*; that general subscriptions of money have been entered into by the inhabitants, to purchase provisions for the troops; by which means the end proposed, of making the burthen fall as much as possible on the guilty, is entirely defeated by making it fall in a light proportion on the whole, and thereby easing and protecting the guilty,—it has been thought proper to direct, that wherever that practice has been adopted, or shall be attempted, the general officers commanding divisions of the southern district shall immediately *double, triple, and quadruple* the number of soldiers so stationed; and shall send out regular foraging parties to provide provisions for the troops, in the quantities mentioned in the former notice, bearing date the 27th day of April, 1798; and that they shall move them from station, through the district or barony, until *all* arms are surrendered, and tranquillity be perfectly restored—and until it is reported to the general officers, by the gentlemen holding landed property, and those who are employed in collecting the public revenues and tithes, that *all rents, taxes, and tithes are completely paid up*.\*

“Adjutant-General’s Office.”

The foregoing presents an imposing feature in the general system pursued for “*The Restoration of Public Tranquillity!*” FREE QUARTERS! Of a! the ills inflicted on our unhappy country in the hour of her contemplated desolation, Free Quarters was the most intolerable. In that term was implied the unrestricted indulgence in every species of military outrage—the destruction of property, the violation of virtue, and the privation of life. All were at the mercy of a licentious soldiery! From the dwelling of the industrious farmer, to the mansion of the most independent member of the community, these freebooters were distributed in tens, twenties, and fifties in number, with their horses, baggage, and accoutrements; transforming the peaceful residence of the native into the disorderly barrack, for the sensual carousal of the stranger.

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\* It does not appear what mode this *considerate* officer had devised for the payments of “Rents, Taxes, and Tithes,” when the substance of the farmer should be consumed, or his property pillaged by a *tranquillizing soldiery!*



Provisions were supplied to the troops, and consumed with a wasteful extravagance; while the luxuries of the table increased the moral depravity of the soldiery, who exercised the most disgusting tyranny over the defenceless household. Whole families, shrinking from the approach of these detested marauders, often deserted their dwellings, leaving their homes and their property a prey to the dissolute despoilers, who frequently pillaged or destroyed what they were unable otherwise to consume. The system of free quarters was not abandoned until the practice at length became hazardous—many of these domesticated violators having fallen under the manly vengeance of an outraged and indignant population. I could recount atrocities which nerved the arm of the avenger for the punishment of the perpetrator, at which humanity would shudder, did not delicacy restrain the recital.

Free Quarters formed one portion of that ministerial plan of coercion under which “those atrocious cruelties were practised,” which impelled Mr. Fox in the Commons, and the Duke of Bedford in the Lords, to proclaim to the world their abhorrence of that system.

The orders of the Lord Lieutenant and Council, and the proclamations of the British generals in command, were the documents to which the English peers adverted in their memorable protest, on the rejection of the Duke of Bedford’s motion “for an immediate stop to the system of coercion enforced in Ireland, with a rigour shocking to humanity and disgraceful to the British name.” These were the documents which they pronounced “Irresistible Evidence of the rigorous proceedings of the army in Ireland,” affirming at the same time, “that the effects produced by that barbarous system, convicted the authors and advisers of such a total want of wisdom, even for their own pretended purposes, as could only be exceeded by the shocking cruelty of the principles avowed, and of the practice recommended by them.” It was to these documents that the same high-minded noblemen referred, as evidence conclusive “that the system of coercion had not been hastily resorted to on the spur of an instant necessity, but that it was *deliberately* resolved on, long before it could be justified or palliated by any of the pretences or causes assigned in defence of it.” And on that evidence they appealed, in their own justification, “to their country, to the world, and to posterity.”



Here then we have, on imperishable record, the solemn attestation of the most distinguished peers of the British Senate—uncontradicted to this hour, and incontrovertible in its nature—of the foulest treason which the most profligate minister of a crown ever practised against the rights of a people !

The Wexford United forces, though they had suffered severely in the battle of New Ross, seemed by no means depressed by the issue of the contest. So little apprehension did they entertain of any annoyance from the garrison, which had so bravely contested with them the occupation of that town, that in a few days after they formed their encampment on Lacken Hill, situate but two miles distant from the late scene of action.

In the interim they had made some active movements ; and with an eye on Duncannon Fort, they attacked the gun-boats in the channel, which kept open a navigable communication between that fortress and the garrisons of Waterford and New Ross. Had the Wexford forces succeeded in this bold and daring enterprise, the next step, in all probability, would have led to the investment of Duncannon Fort, and the capture of General Fawcett with the garrison under his command. With that fortress in the hands of the people ; the military supplies which it contained, and the command of the inland channel, the city of Waterford must have fallen an easy conquest ; and the flame of insurrection spreading through the south, the entire province of Munster, in forty-eight hours after, would have been in arms.

This enterprise, though frustrated, was not altogether unattended with advantage. Some small vessels were captured, one of which contained a government mail ; and this was the first channel of intelligence through which the segregated county of Wexford acquired any authentic information on the general state of the country.

Though Harvey was brave, and his plan of attack judiciously formed, still his conduct at New Ross did not escape the animadversion of his troops. The failure was attributed to his defective arrangements ; at the same time, had those arrangements been acted on, little doubt can be entertained that they would have proved successful. The situation of a first in command was far from an enviable one. At the head of an irregular force, the leader had often difficulties to con-

tend with, which even in the best organised armies, cannot always be obviated ; and it is not therefore matter of surprise, that men who were but a few weeks—nay, many but a few days—in arms, marched from their homes, and opposed at once to a regular army, did not, under the disappointed hopes of victory, form the most dispassionate judgment on the merits of their commander.

General Harvey resigning the command of this division of the United forces to the Rev. Philip Roche, returned to his head-quarters at Wexford. Roche was a popular leader, and well adapted for the duties of that arduous station to which he had been appointed ; a man of firm mind, quick discernment, powerful muscular strength, and intrepid courage. Nature seemed to have designed him for a soldier. Capable of sustaining in his own person the severest privations and fatigue, he possessed in an eminent degree that essential qualification for command, the address for enforcing a proper subordination, and a due sense of discipline in others. But under a rough and soldierly exterior, was concealed a heart of the most humane and generous disposition.

A division of the Wexford army which was now encamped at Gorey, in the northern quarter of that county, contemplated an attack on the town of Arklow, with the view of forming a junction with their Wicklow fellow-countrymen, and opening a direct line of march upon the city of Dublin. For the internal safety of Wexford no fears were entertained. The entire south of the county was in the undisputed possession of the people, the fort of Duncannon excepted ; and there General Fawcett, with his garrison pent up within its walls, evinced no disposition for a second encounter with the enemy. From Generals Johnson and Eustace, shut up in New Ross, no offensive operations were apprehended. The bold and adventurous Philip Roche was in their immediate vicinity. The permanent camp on Vinegar Hill kept the royal army in Newtownbarry on the alert ; and the town of Wexford was, for some time previous, so free from alarm, that its civil jurisdiction principally occupied the attention of the inhabitants.

Arklow, which had been hastily abandoned on the death of Walpole, and the defeat and rout of the British forces under his command, was now strengthened by a garrison of 1600 effective men, all in high spirits and fresh for action ;



many having been conveyed on cars, carriages, and different vehicles of expedition from the metropolis. No means were spared to strengthen a post of so much importance; and Arklow presented a garrison admirably arranged, and well supplied with every material for defensive war: the cavalry, in particular, were selected from the best in the service. The command of this town was intrusted to General Needham.

The United forces marched from their camp at Gorey, to attack the town of Arklow, on the 9th June. They mustered strong; but as usual, in point of ammunition were very defective. They had received but the day before a slender supply from the town of Wexford, the garrison of which was as nearly deficient in that article as themselves. The British army expected the attack, and consequently had full time to avail themselves of every advantage which their position afforded. The river on one side formed a natural barrier of defence, while General Needham's line, strongly posted, was defended on the right and on the rear by the town and barracks of Arklow.

The assault was, in conformity with the usual mode of Irish tactics, bold and rapid—the United troops bearing on the town in two columns, with the view of forcing an entrance in opposite directions. The out-posts of the enemy on the first attack were soon driven from their position; and some yeomanry cavalry, which had been stationed in that quarter, were precipitated into the river. One of the suburbs of the town having been fired in the assault, the unfortunate yeomanry had no alternative but to swim their horses through the deep and rapid stream, or to face the bristly pikes of their assailants. The 4th Dragoon Guards, the 5th Dragoon Guards, and the Ancient Britons, ashamed at the unmanly flight of their auxiliaries, pressed boldly forward to check the enemy's advance, who, now exposed to a raking fire from musketry and artillery, were repulsed.

To the impetuous charge of the second column was opposed a formidable line of infantry, supported by six pieces of cannon. This line was repeatedly charged, and resisted the several attacks with the greatest firmness; while the boldest feats of courage were displayed by the assailants in their frequent attempts to carry the cannon, which as often swept away whole ranks in their daring advance. As this line formed the principal barrier of defence, the post was



assailed on the one side and defended on the other by the best exertions of both.

The United troops by this time had brought up three pieces of cannon to oppose the British artillery. Mr. Esmond Kyan, a gentleman of distinguished bravery and considerable military experience, perceiving the inefficiency of their fire, quitted the division he commanded, and resigning it to another, applied himself solely to the direction of the guns. Here he gallantly maintained his position throughout the fight. Having dismounted one of the enemy's guns, which caused a momentary confusion in their line, Redmond, a youthful leader, availed himself of the circumstance, and at the head of his band dashed forward to seize on the British cannon. He had laid his hand on a gun, and in the act of cheering his companions, a discharge from a howitzer blew him to atoms.\*

Kyan's well-directed fire, supported by the daring charge of Redmond's division, had obliged the enemy to shift their ground; and the British general, it is said, contemplated a retreat; but in this he was opposed by the second in command. The fortune of the day had wavered more than once; but the want of ammunition had rendered the Wexford musketry unserviceable, and the last cannon had been pointed by the unerring hand of Kyan. Nothing now remained but to charge with the pike. This was gallantly conducted by the Rev. Michael Murphy, in a desperate effort to gain the interior of the town. The onset was bold and determined, and the fate of the day rested on the result, when Murphy fell by a cannon-shot in front of the line, and the United forces retreated. They occupied that night their former position, having carried off their wounded undisturbed by the British in their march. A pursuit would have been an act of great temerity, which the royal army showed no disposition to attempt; for had they quitted their advantageous position, they would have had little chance in contending in an open country with the United troops. Of this they seemed per-

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\* When the intelligence of this disaster was conveyed to the father of the intrepid youth, "I have," said the venerable patriot, "four sons still in arms, and I can afford one to the glory of his country."

Colonel Skerret, second in command under General Needham, bore honourable testimony to the gallant conduct of young Mr. Redmond on this occasion.

fectly sensible ; and it has been asserted, that scarcely a moment intervened between the predetermined intention of the British general to retreat, and the issue of the contest.

The cool and intrepid conduct of Kyan throughout the engagement, was a subject of admiration to both armies. This gentleman having lost an arm, wore an artificial one in its place. In the heat of the action, the artificial arm being carried off by a cannon-shot, which at the same time fractured his shoulder, Kyan jocularly observed to his companions, "My loose timbers are flying—God bless the mark !—and now for the right arm of the British line," deliberately pointing his gun.

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## CHAPTER VI.

*Augmentation of the British Army in Wexford—Deplorable situation of the Country—March of United Forces to Wicklow—General Lake—General Byrne—Lacken Hill Encampment—Masterly Retreat to the Three Rocks—Advance and Concentration of the Royal Troops—Yeomanry and Military Devastations—Massacre of Prisoners in Wexford—Battle of Foulks's Mill—of Enniscorthy—of Vinegar Hill.*

THE United troops, after the battle of Arklow, marched back on their former position, and remained a short time encamped at Gorey ; whence they proceeded to Limerick Hill, a commanding eminence, nearly midway between the post they had quitted and the town of Arklow, the late theatre of contest. There they rested ; while General Needham, with his army shut up in the garrison of Arklow, kept close within his lines of defence, observing that cautious and prudent conduct for which this commander was peculiarly distinguished throughout the Wexford campaign !

The British army having been reinforced, and continuing to receive fresh augmentations ; strong detachments were sent out at intervals from different points, to scour and harass the country in the vicinity of their quarters. On these occasions the most shameful excesses were committed, and every person put to instant death who had the misfortune to fall into their hands. The United troops, who witnessed those enormities, retaliated ; and the country presented a picture

of the most deplorable distress. This vindictive system of warfare proved fatal to the lives of many prisoners on both sides, and aroused a rancorous feeling of animosity, which the more humane and merciful were not at all times able to repress.

To distract the attention of the British troops, and impede the concentration of the immense reinforcements which government had ordered to Wexford, and which were hourly pouring in on that devoted country; as well as to open a communication with their Wicklow friends, the United forces marched from their encampment on Limerick Hill, and entered the county of Wicklow on the 10th of June. Without coming to a general action, they had some smart encounters with detachments of the royal troops; while the yeomanry, stationed at Tinnehely, for the defence of the town, *naturally* fled from the advance of a "rebel force."

Re-entering Wexford, with Byrne of Ballymanus at their head, chief of the Wicklow bands, and a gentleman of high family and fortune,—the descendant of heroes, and as dauntless a leader as ever crossed the lofty mountain barrier or the deep wooded glen of that bold and romantic country, which once formed the proud inheritance of his princely ancestors—the United army occupied a commanding position near Carnew, where they offered battle to the combined forces of Generals Loftus and Dundas; then under the supreme command of General Lake.

These British generals, at the head of a formidable force, with a well-appointed train of artillery, had contemplated nothing less than the capture of the entire army under Byrne's command: while Byrne, no less confident in his troops, dared the enemy to the contest.

The British army commenced a cannonade, which was promptly replied to by three field-pieces, comprising the whole artillery of the United line. General Lake evinced no disposition to press an action; and the United troops, who were too advantageously posted to suffer themselves to be withdrawn from their position, cheered him with loud taunts of defiance. But whatever motive might have influenced the British commander, he retired from the field amidst the exultations of the enemy. The United troops, with that promptitude and celerity which marked all their movements, marched direct for the central encampment on Vinegar Hill.



towards which the British reinforcements were now directing their course.

This was the largest encampment which had been established in Wexford, and remained permanent throughout the contest. Other encampments had been formed in different points, and at different periods, as the state of warfare required ; but Vinegar Hill, from its central position, was considered a situation of so much importance, that particular care was taken to have it always provided with a force which the British commanders had not, on any occasion, considered it prudent to attack. This encampment served as a general depot, from which troops were drawn as circumstances might require, but it was never left defenceless.

To give efficacy to the arrangements which the British general had planned for the reduction of Wexford, he conceived it essential to have this post in his hands ; and to that point the march of all the royal forces was directed ; and, for the first time, the United army of Wexford was compelled to act on the defensive. Hitherto the popular forces had afforded the British garrisons little respite from action ; and even when repulsed, as at Newtownbarr, Arklow, and New Ross, we do not find the British commanders availing themselves of the boasted victory, or gaining one foot of ground in advance. General Needham, in his despatches to Government, represents the enemy as flying in disorder on every side ; and yet, after so *decisive a victory*, he does not for several days venture out a patrol, even a furlong beyond his garrison. When, from the silence of the country around, and the apparent inaction of the enemy, he did hazard the advance of a cavalry corps some distance to the southward of his station, we find a few hardy pikemen, stripped to their shirts that they might be free for the onset, charging his yeomanry bands and driving them back in terror on the garrison.

By the preconcerted arrangements of Lieut.-General Lake, who was appointed to the command of the royal army in Wexford, the several British divisions arrived at their respective stations with little variation in point of time. It was thus by the prompt co-operation of all that he hoped to surround the United forces in their encampment on Vinegar Hill, and to terminate, by a decisive action, a campaign, which, though of short duration, had been, so far, most disastrous in its consequences. In point of general officers,

effective troops, excellent commissariat, and a large train of artillery, Ireland had not witnessed since the memorable days of the Boyne and the Shannon, a British army so powerful, and so formidably arrayed, in the bosom of the country, and at war with her population.

I have already mentioned the names of many of the British general officers in the Wexford campaign. The following, from the official communications published by Lord Castle-reagh, enumerates those officers only of superior rank and title, who were engaged in the actions of the 20th and 21st of June: Lieutenant-General Lake, Commander-in-chief; Lieutenant-General Dundas, Major-General Sir James Duff, Major-General Sir Charles Asgill, Hon. Major-General Needham, Major-Generals Johnson, Eustace, Cradock, Loftus, Hewitt; Brigadier-General Moore; Lords Ancram, Roden, Blaney, Glentworth, Loftus, Dalhousie, etc.: the aggregate force under the command of General Lake approximating to 20,000 men.

Vinegar Hill being the great point of contest, every effort was made on the part of the United forces to strengthen that position. Their camp at Lacken Hill had been surprised early on the morning of the 19th, by the unexpected advance of General Johnson, with the British garrison from New Ross. The previous supineness of that garrison had lulled the Lacken forces into a false security, who, almost totally unprovided with ammunition, were in no state of defence. In fact, so little vigilance had latterly been observed, that most of the troops were enjoying their repose at the moment when the enemy was advancing to surround their camp; and the Rev. General Roche was aroused from his sleep to provide for the security of his men. Prompt and daring, Roche, at the head of a small body of horsemen, dashed to the front, and throwing himself between the enemy and his encampment, raised a shout of defiance; while some of his horsemen exhibiting banners in different directions, which he ordered to be carried with velocity from post to post, the enemy, under the impression that the whole camp was in arms, neglected the favourable moment for assault. Roche, in the meantime, had ordered his foot to retreat, who, descending from the opposite side of the hill, were soon beyond the reach of annoyance. Having baffled the enemy by this masterly manœuvre, Roche wheeled rapidly with his cavalry,



—covered his retreating army,—and without the loss of a man, gained the bold and secure position of the three rocks on the mountain of Forth, memorable from the total destruction of General Fawcett's advance-guard and the capture of his artillery.

The British army, as usual, laid waste the country in their march. Fire and rapine marked their course; while the wives and children of the unfortunate peasantry, flying from their fury, crowded to the town of Wexford for protection. In this savage scene of military outrage, the yeomanry bore a most conspicuous part. Having had hitherto no chance in contending with their countrymen in arms, and no security but within the British lines, they had generally abandoned their stations and fled to the British garrisons for protection. But now, returning with those troops, they gave loose to the most disgraceful indulgence in every disorderly excess; encouraging, by their representations and example, those enormities in others, for the perpetration of which they required but little excitement. Yet in this general system of brutal warfare, an honourable exception was to be found in the rigid discipline which was exercised, and the manly virtue displayed by the humane and gallant General Moore.\* While he discharged with fidelity the trust reposed in him by the crown, he was not insensible to the protection which he owed to the subject; and abhorring the system of plunder and outrage, so subversive of discipline and order, he inflicted exemplary punishment on some of the offenders. But the contagion had spread too far, and was too generally encouraged by other authorities, to be restrained, even in his own division, to the extent which he laboured to accomplish.

The recital of the cruelties perpetrated by the several divisions of the royal army in their march, the general conflagration (discernible from the encampment on the mountain of Forth), and the scenes of devastation described by the horrified fugitives, who were momentarily crowding into Wexford, gave rise to a deed of dreadful atrocity in the town. The greater portion of the armed inhabitants had been marched out to oppose the enemy, and only a slender force remained for the preservation of internal order. Advantage was taken of this circumstance by an unfeeling and ferocious

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\* The late Sir John Moore.



monster, who, appointing a tribunal of his own wicked associates, commenced with the mockery of trial ; but throwing off the mask, proceeded to the open and brutal massacre of many unfortunate prisoners ! An ungovernable mob, roused to the highest pitch of frenzy, was instigated by this barbarous wretch to that demoniac act, which all the exertions of the humane and well-disposed citizens were unable to prevent.\*

The human mind is appalled in retracing those scenes of blood—revolting to our nature, and unpalliated by any plea either of justice or expediency. Retaliation, under any circumstance, can only be regarded as a last dreadful expedient, to which outraged humanity has sometimes recourse ; when reprisals, by death, as resorted to in the American contest, may stop the more profuse effusion of innocent blood, and give a less barbarous feature to that inhuman system of warfare, which recognises no mercy towards the defenceless or the weak. But the magnanimous soul must ever be abhorrent to that practice, which, in the reversion of moral justice, punishes the unoffending for the crimes of others.

The fate of Wexford had now drawn near to a crisis. Her harbour was blockaded by ships of war. Troops were encompassing her on the land side, while her enemy had concentrated a powerful army in the heart of the country. In this awful state of her affairs, the spirit of her people was still unsubdued ! And the man who dared to express a feeling of alarm, or to breathe a doubt of success, was pronounced an enemy to his country and a traitor to her cause. Some of the boldest leaders had fallen in the many desperate conflicts with the royal troops ; and others, from the effects of their wounds, were unfitted for service. The brave and scientific Kyan was labouring under severe torture from a contusion of the shoulder which he had received at the battle of Arklow. Kelly, whose gallant conduct at New Ross will long be remembered, was now writhing under a mortal wound, which, in a few days, would have terminated his existence,

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\* Mr. Edward Hay, who was in the town of Wexford, and encountered much personal risk in his humane endeavours to protect the unfortunate sufferers, describes, in feeling language, the exertions of the Catholic clergy—the principal inhabitants, and others, to appease the popular excitement. Thirty-six in all, was the number, he says, of those who perished “on that ever to be lamented day.”—See *Hay's Insurrection of Wexford*, page 220.

and deprived his enemies of an unmanly triumph over courage and humanity. The Rev. Michael Murphy, whom the prostitute press and the hireling scribes of that day represented as a "fanatical leader," died, even in the estimation of his calumniators, the death of a hero. Redmond, with a host of gallant youths, had met the soldier's fate; but a number of bold and daring spirits still remained, who, committed with their country's fortune, rested all their hopes and views on the success of her arms. Harvey, Perry, Roche, Cloney, Colclough, Byrne, Grey, Fitzgerald, Doyle, and other distinguished leaders, ardent for the field, occupied their respective stations. A slender garrison for the protection of the town was placed under the command of Captain Matthew Keugh, while all others able to bear arms were ordered to the field.

The combined British forces, under the command of General Lake, had received his instructions for the general attack, which he ordered to be made the following morning, the 21st of June, on the town of Enniscorthy and the United Irish camp on Vinegar Hill. General Moore, who had taken up his position near Foulks's Mill, marched out early on the evening of the 20th to co-operate with the combined forces, in conformity with the general orders of the Commander-in-chief. The rear of his army had scarcely cleared the boundaries of his encampment, when the United division of the Rev. Philip Roche presented itself to his view. A moment was not lost in preparation on either side: both armies rushed to the conflict. The battle was bravely contested. Roche displayed the highest qualities characteristic of the soldier. In the arrangement of his troops—in his rapid evolutions—his military character was fully developed. From the nature of the ground, most unfavourable to his attack, had he not possessed a considerable share of military science, the most invincible courage could not have availed him.

It was only the day before that Roche had conducted the masterly retreat of his division from Lacken Hill; and his ardent and enterprising spirit had neither allowed him rest, nor the necessary refreshments for nature, when he was again in arms; contending with one of the ablest generals in the British service—manœuvring in front of a veteran line, and opposing to their well-served artillery a few pieces of ill-mounted ordnance, which were dragged to the field by his



hardy followers, on the rude-formed carts of the country, over mountain roads impassable to horses.

General Roche, from the situation of the ground, was unable to bring the body of his pikemen into action ; who, throughout the day, kept a vigilant eye on the Hompesch dragoons.\* His musketry was principally engaged ; and, in this point of force, it is admitted, his number was much inferior to the enemy's : while his whole park of artillery consisted of six pieces of small ship cannon, procured from a vessel in the harbour of Wexford. Notwithstanding the disadvantages under which he laboured—the well-appointed army, and the able general to which he was opposed—he bravely maintained the field in a hard-fought contest of nearly five hours' unremitting action, the issue of which was doubtful by turns—when, fortune seeming to incline the balance in his favour, Lord Dalhousie appeared with two fresh regiments of foot to reinforce the army of General Moore ; and the gallant Philip Roche, having expended his last round of ammunition, retreated in good order to his invulnerable encampment on the Three Rocks. General Moore took up his station for the night on the field of battle.

By his bold attack on the army of General Moore—maintained and resisted with equal obstinacy and courage—Roche hoped to have rendered himself master of New Ross ; and had that important station fallen into his hands, with the garrison supplies—so much wanting to the United troops—it must have materially altered the arrangements of General Lake for the approaching battle of the 21st.

Over the town of Enniscorthy rose the United Irish camp of Vinegar Hill. This station, which will be ever memorable in the annals of Wexford, is situated on the eastern side of the Slaney, a noble river, dividing a great portion of the

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\* This body of German mercenaries, selected by the British minister as admirable auxiliaries in his war of extermination on the Irish people, had, by the perpetration of outrages hitherto unexampled, rendered themselves peculiarly obnoxious. Their acts of pillage, and of yet greater atrocities, were not always confined to any particular party ; and the grossness of their insults to unprotected females, rendered their name detested and accursed. "Kill a Hessian," became a proverbial term ! and men, infuriated by their presence, have been known to break from their ranks, regardless of consequences, even should they perish in the attempt, to deal out their full meed of vengeance on the ruffian despoiler.



county of Wexford into east and west, and taking in its course the town of Enniscorthy, which stands on either bank.

This town, which was stormed by the United forces on the 28th of May, and carried after a desperate conflict, remained, together with Vinegar Hill, in their undisturbed possession until the 21st of June, when the royal army, under General Lake, commenced its operations.

Early on the morning of the 21st, General Johnson opened his attack on the town; Lake commencing at the same moment his approaches on the camp. The royal army marched in four divisions, with the view of surrounding the United forces, who, though powerful in point of numbers, were ill provided with the necessary supplies for defensive war. So deficient were they in ammunition, that the stores of the camp afforded but two rounds for their cannon; and the total supply of the town was confined to a few pounds of gunpowder, not sufficient for one hour's expenditure in its defence.\* Thus circumstanced, the United forces met the advance of the British army, whom, in their accustomed mode of warfare, they received with a cheer of defiance.

The attack of General Johnson's division on Enniscorthy was boldly and ably conducted; while those in defence of the town fought with the courage of men who seemed determined not to survive defeat. Lavish of life, they almost wantonly exposed themselves to the destructive fire of the British artillery. Many acts of personal courage were displayed—a quality in which none of the leaders seemed deficient. Mr. Edward Fitzgerald of Newpark, was seen at every point where the assault of the enemy was fiercest; and where the fire of their cannon had shattered the ranks, they were as promptly repaired by his activity in bringing up fresh men to the action. Mr. Baker, who—if I am correct in remembrance—was formerly an officer of the Irish Brigade—a soldier of fortune in the service of France—distinguished

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\* Gunpowder was an article most difficult of attainment. Long anterior to the commencement of hostilities, Government had seized on all within their reach, and severe penalties were attached to the detection of it in the hands of unauthorized persons. The Wexford forces procured some supplies of powder, but to a very limited extent, from the vessels in harbour; and some of the more scientific amongst the people had, from necessity, learnt to manufacture that material, but the quantity was small, and the quality inferior.

himself by the intrepidity he displayed in leading on a charge to the Duffrey Gate. He had twice penetrated the British line ; but having lost an arm in the action, and becoming exhausted from the effusion of blood, he sunk under debility and the smart of his wound. The Rev. — Kearns having been wounded early in the action on Vinegar Hill, and forced from his station, seeing the gallant struggle in defence of the town, threw himself into the centre of the conflicting parties, and fought with the most determined courage throughout the conflict.

Whilst General Johnson followed up his attack on the town, the Commander-in-chief was vigorously pursuing his assault on the camp. In this action, the more severe duty was sustained by the centre division under General Dundas, which was supported on the right by Generals Loftus and Duff. The division of General Needham, on the left, bore no share in the contest of the day, the Hon. Commander not having come up to his station until the battle had been decided !

The United forces maintained their position, and, as the enemy expressed it, "obstinately," for two hours, notwithstanding their want of ammunition, and the disadvantages under which they fought. To the enemy's artillery they had nothing to oppose. Their cannon lay silent and useless on the hill—two rounds having exhausted their ammunition. Neither could they hope to carry the enemy's guns, nor to make any efficient impression by a charge with the pike, agreeable to their usual mode of warfare. The arrangement of the artillery, to which the British commander had paid peculiar attention, precluded the possibility of success. Some, however, had the temerity to propose this desperate expedient ; but Harvey, with the more considerate chiefs, was averse to the wasteful expenditure of blood, which must consequently have followed, without any ultimate advantage being obtained : and serious loss had already been encountered.

The British troops, in their several approaches to storm the camp, were boldly repulsed ; but falling back, were protected under shelter of their cannon. The Shelmaliere musketeers,\* a force which in this engagement could have

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\* These troops, inhabitants of the Barony of Shelmaliere, were remarkable for their steady discipline and well-directed fire.



been most serviceably employed, had not arrived at the point of action. They had marched for the camp of Vinegar Hill, under the command of General Edward Roche, but by some unaccountable occurrence were prevented co-operating with their countrymen in its defence. The division of Roche had been long and anxiously looked for ; and the non-arrival of so powerful an auxiliary had tended to dispirit the hopes with which the United forces were animated from the commencement of the action.

On this exposed and now untenable situation, it was evident that a prolonged resistance could only serve to increase those disasters which the United troops had so far sustained with an admirable firmness ; and Harvey, in compassion to the brave men under his command, ordered a retreat. The United forces, on abandoning their position, were quickly pursued by the enemy's horse ; when Roche, at this critical moment coming up with his division, threw himself between the cavalry and the fugitive army ; and, with much ability, covered the retreat of his countrymen.

The conflict in the town of Enniscorthy was more sanguinary than the action on Vinegar Hill. For two hours it presented a frightful scene of carnage. When taken possession of by the British troops, amongst the many other acts of cruelty committed, was the immolation of the sick and wounded in hospital ! A large edifice had been fitted up, by order of the United chiefs, for the reception of their wounded companions-in-arms ; this, stored with these unhappy sufferers, was fired by the British soldiery, and every man within its walls consumed to ashes !” \* For this most wanton act of barbarity no excuse was offered—no feeling of compassion was breathed for the wretched victims—no effort used to stay the fury of their incendiaries, nor any official order issued to stamp the mark of disapproval on a deed which reflects eternal shame on its abettors.

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\* A reverend historian of that period writes—“Excesses, as must be expected in such a state of affairs, were committed by the soldiery, particularly by the Hessian troops, who co-operated with the British on this occasion.” . . . And in a note he afterwards adds—“I am informed by a surgeon, that the burning was accidental ; the bed-clothes being set on fire by the wadding of the soldiers' guns, who were shooting the patients in their beds.”—*See Gordon's History of the Irish Rebellion.*

“Shooting the patients in their beds !”—Is this intended as a palliation of incendiarism and murder ?



Death, under the most aggravating circumstances of cruelty, was inflicted on those who fell into the hands of the victors. The surrounding country, now cleared of its armed population, was scoured by the soldiery. Houses, fields, and the most solitary recesses were searched for fresh victims—neither age, nor sex, nor condition was spared; and the wife or daughter, whether of friend or of foe, became the indiscriminate spoil of the ruffian in arms. The aged mother was doomed to witness the distraction of her child, torn from her last embrace; whom, when the wretched father was no longer able to defend—abandoning himself to despair, he poured out, with his dying breath, the maledictions of his soul on the despoiler of innocence. The Ancient Britons and German mercenaries were more disgustingly conspicuous for the ferocity they evinced; massacring, in many instances, the unfortunate females who had been the victims of their violence! But enough of these revolting scenes.

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## CHAPTER VII.

*Retreat of the United forces to the Three Rocks—Lord Kingsborough—Town of Wexford—Negotiations—Surrender—Embassy to General Lake—Advance of the British Army—March of the United forces—to the North—to the West—Military Movements—Castlecomer, attacked and burned—Dispersion of the Western Division of the Wexford Army—Progress of the Northern Division.*

THE United forces, after retreating from Enniscorthy and Vinegar Hill, took post on their favourite station—the Three Rocks. There they prepared to receive the royal army, and made the best possible arrangements for defence; but the town of Wexford, not more than three miles distant from their position, was now seeking a capitulation with the British Commander-in-chief. Timid counsels on the one hand, and fallacious promises on the other, had influenced the inhabitants to the adoption of this measure.

Amongst the prisoners who had fallen into the hands of the people was one of superior rank and title—Lord Kingsborough. This nobleman, who was also a military officer—being colonel of the North Cork regiment of Militia—was

supposed to possess much influence with the government. Certainly, so far as the adoption of their principles and a co-operation in the violence of their measures afforded him a claim, few were more deserving of their confidence. A master in the science of flagellation, and familiar with the cat-o'-nine-tails' use, he was also reported to have had the merit of introducing that implement of torture—the PITCH CAP—which rivalled, in the severity of its application, any intervention of tyranny in those days of terror. It is not surprising, therefore, that Lord Kingsborough, in the hands of an irritated population, gladly embraced any measure for his enlargement. He had frequent cause for alarm, on the score of personal safety; but from the earnest appeals of the leaders to the generosity of the people, he experienced no personal injury throughout the period of his captivity.

At the moment when the United forces were contending with the royal army at Enniscorthy and Vinegar Hill, Lord Kingsborough, with the inhabitants of Wexford, was negotiating for the surrender of the town—the noble prisoner having pledged his honour for the safety of the place, and the security of the people. On these conditions the command of Wexford was transferred to his hands—conditions which, even had he the disposition, he did not possess the power to ratify. The promoters of this measure, to which the population of the town were reluctantly led to assent, had soon cause to deplore the consequences which followed—more calamitous in the result than a prolonged resistance—and disastrous to those who were weak enough to confide in the faith of an enemy, while they had arms in their hands for self-protection.

An embassy was immediately despatched to General Lake, with letters from Lord Kingsborough, explanatory of the conditions on which he had received the surrender of the town, and for the faithful performance of which *the honour of Lord Kingsborough was guarantee!* The conditions, had the United forces been reduced to extremity, were not unfavourable—a total oblivion of the past, with full protection and security for lives and properties. These conditions extended to all in arms, with the exception of such as had committed outrage or murder; and to such men the United authorities never desired to have protection extended.

The United chiefs had not been consulted on this arrange-

ment—they were fighting the battle of their country, when the town of Wexford was negotiating a surrender; and on their retreat to the Three Rocks, they first learnt the astounding intelligence. Some immediately hastened to the town, but Wexford was no longer in a situation for resistance; and lest those chiefs, who preferred the fortune of war to the faith of the enemy, might influence the inhabitants to reject Lord Kingsborough's treaty, every exertion was used to withdraw them from the town, where their presence and example might have inspired confidence in the people.

These measures proved but too successful; and Generals Roche, Fitzgerald, and Perry, leaving the town to its negotiations with the enemy, marched from the Rocks, forming into two divisions their respective forces.

The embassy from Wexford having reached the headquarters of the British army, were detained for the night; and on the following morning sent back with the answer of the Commander-in-chief:—"Lieutenant-General Lake cannot attend to any terms by rebels in arms against their Sovereign; while they continue so, he must use the force entrusted to him with the utmost energy for their destruction. To the deluded multitude he promises pardon, on their delivering into his hands their leaders, surrendering their arms, and returning with sincerity to their allegiance.

"G. LAKE.

"*Enniscorthy, June 22, 1798.*"

General Moore had taken a commanding position over the town of Wexford. The United troops had withdrawn from its defence. It was now too late to retrieve the past, and the fatal error was only discernible when all hopes of negotiation or resistance had fled.

Lake hastened his march to the town: no obstacle was opposed to his entrance, and, consequently, no pretext afforded for the slaughter of the defenceless inhabitants. Wexford had been surrendered to a commissioned officer of the crown, and whatever feeling of hostility might otherwise have actuated the Commander-in-chief, he could not, on this occasion, have indulged it, without a gross violation of duty and discipline. Wexford *was not fired* by the British army on their entrance! but those who had confided in the faith of Lord Kingsborough, had soon reason to deplore the fatal consequences of their rash and ill-placed confidence.



General Harvey, Colclough, and some others, perceiving with sorrow their last town surrendered into the hands of the enemy, which precluded any hope of future success, availing themselves of Lord Kingsborough's treaty, retired from the field and returned to their homes ; but they shortly after paid the forfeit of their lives and fortunes, for the confidence they reposed in a man who evinced no further concern for their safety. The greater number, less credulous, retained their arms ; and at the head of their devoted followers, in despite of every effort to impede their march, opened a passage through the enemy, who had endeavoured to surround them. One division entered Wicklow, on the north, whilst another traversed Carlow ; Kilkenny, and Queen's County, on the west ; fighting every inch of ground, and, on many occasions, with serious loss to their opponents. For seventeen days, few hours passed without a conflict, in which one or other of those divisions was engaged ; and, though a heavy mass of cavalry hung on the rear, with the army of Sir Charles Asgill opposed to its front, the western division penetrated to the very precincts of his quarters, and, almost in his presence, forced a military station, captured a small detachment of foot, and carried them off prisoners of war, while the cavalry preserved themselves by a precipitate retreat. So rapid were the movements of this division, that the town of Castlecomer was assailed, captured, and burned before General Asgill, with his whole disposable force in motion, could afford it relief.\* The burning of this town was in retaliation for an uncalled-for act of violence on the part of the enemy.

The town of Castlecomer, situated ten miles to the north of the city of Kilkenny, was the seat of the venerable Countess of Ormonde and Ossory, mother of the late and present Marquesses of Ormonde. The noble proprietress, whose long and honourable life was conspicuous for the exercise of every virtue, had retired from the county at that

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\* This general, in his despatches to Lord Castlereagh, observes, that having received information early on the morning of the 22nd of June that the rebels who had escaped from Wexford had encamped at Kellymount, and were proceeding to Gore's Bridge, instantly marched towards them, but did not arrive in time to prevent their defeating the detachment at that place. And again—he was sorry that they had driven out the garrison at Castlecomer, and burned the town, before his arrival.—*See Official Communications.*

season of alarm. In respect to the character of this estimable lady, the United forces halted on their march; and despatching a flag of truce to her mansion, the head-quarters of the cavalry, requested permission to proceed on their route through the town, which they had no wish to injure, and to which no violence should be offered. The bearer of the flag, on approaching the cavalry station, was shot! when the resentment of the Wexford troops became ungovernable. The mansion was fired, and the town instantly assailed, which for a considerable time was defended with courage and effect. The garrison was small, but its fire, commanding the bridge on the entrance to the town, cost the United division the loss of nearly 100 men before they could gain an entrance. It is somewhat remarkable on this occasion that, though the river was fordable, the United troops preferred forcing the bridge to the less hazardous passage of the river, as if in contempt of the slender garrison from which they received so much annoyance. The town had been carried—the United division had proceeded on its march, and everything had been restored to its original quiet, when General Asgil. made his appearance.

His approach was slow, cautious, and deliberate. He commenced a fire of artillery at a harmless distance, which not being returned, he was emboldened to advance, and continued to batter the roofless walls, ill calculated to afford shelter to either friend or foe. After a pompous display of military parade, and a wasteful expenditure of ammunition, he ordered his artillery to cease; being at length convinced of the peaceful disposition of the town.

The painful circumstances of the day were chequered by the occurrence of one of those livelier scenes, which often took place during the contest of Ninety-eight. The cavalry (yeomanry) had retreated from their quarters early in the action; and the Wexford division, to whom this force was seldom formidable, were so much amused with the mode of their flight, that no measures were taken to prevent an escape. Part of the troop had dismounted—which left a surplus number of horses to be attended to—and the retreat had been sounded, when each mounted dragoon, taking an extra horse by the bridle, placed the animal between himself and the enemy's fire; then lowering his head beneath the pommel of the saddle, exhibited only that portion of his person to



the enemy's view, over which the most timid warrior never thinks of extending a shield. Away then they galloped ! while the Wexford musketeers, amused by the novelty of this ingenious retreat, cheered with loud peals of laughter the "Headless Dragoons," calling on them to take their time, that they had nothing to fear, for it were a sin to waste powder on headless men.

The native vivacity of the Irish character displays itself in every situation in life ; whether in peril or in safety—in victory or defeat. The following anecdote I had from a gentleman in the county of Kilkenny, who accompanied the march of Sir Charles Asgill to what he facetiously termed "The Relief of Costlecomer." It had been suggested to this general officer, that the thick plantations in the immediate vicinity of that town were well adapted for an ambuscade, and might now, perhaps, be filled with rebels, as none had been discernible on the line of his march. The general profited by the suggestion, and ordered the woods to be scoured. A round of cannon-shot was first discharged through the lofty pines, which rise majestically over a delightful valley on the banks of the Comer river. The loud echo, rebounding from the surrounding hills, was answered by the discharge of a solitary musket-shot—faint from the distance, and scarcely audible to the ear. Again the cannon plied, and the same faint sound was returned from the forest ! No doubt was now entertained that a rebel force occupied this inviting position, and instant orders were given to dislodge them. A strong body of horse was ordered in advance, to watch the motions of the enemy, while other troops were distributed in different directions to cut off his retreat. The cavalry had crossed the river, and were winding up a steep hill by the outskirts of the forest, when a shot from the covert was discharged with effect, and almost instantly repeated. The dragoons, without being able to perceive an enemy, poured in their fire on the direction from which they continued to be assailed ; when, after several discharges on either side, they at length discovered two men entrenched behind the trunk of a venerable pine, around which they had collected some bramble and brushwood, forming a rude kind of breast-work. Here, while one of the men, apparently wounded, and supported by the tree, was loading a musket, the other kept firing with deliberate aim from their entrenchment.



The dragoons conceiving this to be one of the out-posts of the enemy, and their little entrenchment a point of observation, hastily fell back; selecting, on the instant, the most favourable ground for defence, in the momentary expectation of an attack. No enemy appearing, and the solitary individuals still occupying their position, two horsemen advanced and demanded their surrender. "Surrender!" replied the intrepid Shelmaliere, presenting his piece; "and if it's surrender you want, come in, and be after surrendering at discretion!" A fire from the horsemen cut short the conference—the Shelmaliere fell, and his wounded companion was made prisoner.

These poor fellows had been separated from their division. One of them, wounded in the action on the town, was unable to follow his companions; the other would not desert his comrade in misfortune, and supported him to that secluded spot, to which the report of a musket had attracted General Asgill's attention. There they had a view of his advance; and from that intuitive feeling which so peculiarly marks the character of the southern peasantry of Ireland, they could not resist the impulse of returning the general's fire. To separate, consistent with their feelings of friendship, was impossible—they knew the fate which, on discovery, awaited them; but careless of life, they resolved it should terminate with the annoyance of the enemy.

The United troops had now taken a more westerly direction, and being provided with an immense number of horses, their movements were almost inconceivably rapid. When their object was to surprise a military station, or to effect any measure which could be facilitated by promptness in the execution, the commanders ordered two men to mount each horse; thus a considerable force was speedily conveyed to the desired point; where the men dismounting and fresh for action, poured at once and unexpectedly on the enemy. By this plan of operation, the western division had traversed a wide range of country, but not without considerable loss in their different encounters with the royal army. They had hoped, by a bold display of courage on their part, to have promoted an insurrectionary movement amongst the population of the country through which they passed. Not succeeding in this measure—harrassed by the British forces, and nearly worn out by incessant toil, they faced again for Wex-

ford. Halting, for the night, on their march, they occupied an eminence, which they found in the morning was surrounded by the enemy, who had approached unobserved under cover of a dense fog. A heavy fire of artillery was the first announcement of their perilous situation. Encompassed by nearly 2000 British troops, they sustained a severe loss in their retreat, which, from the gallant conduct of their cavalry, they were enabled to effect.

Pushing forward, they gained the Wexford border; and bearing down the troops who were opposed to their advance, they again forced the celebrated pass of Scollagh Gap, and re-entered their native county.

A portion of this daring band, still holding together, proceeded to Wicklow, while the greater number dispersed—some retiring to their homes, others seeking out the ruins of their former habitations.

The northern division of the Wexford army, which had taken up a position for the night of the 21st of June, previous to its abandonment of the county, learned that great acts of cruelty were then being perpetrated by the yeomanry from Gorey.; who, having no danger to apprehend, or enemy in that quarter to encounter, ranged unmolested through the country—massacring the inhabitants in their houses, and putting all stragglers to the sword. This intelligence determined the division to change its intended route, and, under the very eye of the British army, to punish the offenders. They marched direct for Gorey!

The country through which they passed exhibited the most appalling sights!—dead bodies, mangled and mutilated, strewn the road—the lifeless corpses of women and children met the eye; and while some men were observed yet writhing in the agonies of death, the bodies of others were devoured in the streets by the swine!\*

The feelings of our countrymen were unable to sustain those sights; but while the heart melted with pity, the soul burned for revenge. “To Gorey! to Gorey!” was one universal cry, which resounded from the advance-guard to the rear of the line; and

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\* From the number of those animals which it was known had preyed upon human carcasses, during, and after the Wexford campaign, no swine's flesh, supposed to be the produce of that country, was vendible in any market for a long period subsequent.



every nerve was braced, and every arm extended to lay Gorey in ruin.

A feeble attempt was opposed to the entrance of the troops. Panic-struck, the enemy fled; and such as were not preserved by a precipitate flight, were cut down with an unsparing hand. Hot in pursuit of the foe, the contemplated destruction of Gorey was, for a time, abandoned; but the feverish excitement soon returned, and the troops pressed forward to inflict a summary chastisement.

At this moment, it was announced to the army, that Newpark—the hospitable mansion of their favourite leader, Edward Fitzgerald—was in flames. The extensive and valuable concerns of this gentleman, with immense stores of grain, were fired and destroyed by a detachment from the army of General Needham, which was laying waste the country around his encampment, and committing the most shameful devastations—deeds gross and atrocious—which the high-minded Moore blushed to witness, but had not the power to prevent. A loud expression of indignation spoke the general feeling throughout the maddened ranks; and Gorey, with all the guilty participators in its late scene of blood, was denounced for destruction!

To restrain the infuriated troops appeared now a task hopeless as resistance to the swelling tide. It seemed idle to remonstrate, and more than folly to expect obedience to command. Beloved by his men, the wrongs of Fitzgerald were regarded as the injuries of all; and, every bosom burning with resentment, the voice of the most favoured chiefs was drowned in the overwhelming cry of “Forward! Gorey and revenge!”

Fitzgerald, though distinguished by all the milder feelings which adorn man in private or in public life, was inflexible as the oak when it was his duty to be firm. The fortune of war, from time to time, had placed many under his protection, and he knew no distinction of friend or foe, where the injured or defenceless claimed his support. The present was, perhaps, the most trying moment of his life—enough had been done—many of the guilty had fallen; and the fugitive foe having abandoned the town to its fate, he contemplated with compassion its defenceless situation. He flew to the front of the line, and placing himself between the exasperated troops and the object of their vengeance, he commanded



them to halt. He expostulated—he threatened—he implored them not to sully their arms by an act of cruelty or revenge; not to imitate the enemy whose conduct had fired their resentment. “Remember,” said he, “that you are Irishmen, and fight only for the freedom of your country. Heaven will not prosper your arms if stained with crime. You shall have revenge! But it will be the glorious revenge of the field!—Follow me! I will lead you to a foe, where honour can be gained by the conflict, and the fortune of your country retrieved by your courage.” Fitzgerald was successful in his appeal to his troops—they cheered and obeyed his orders.

Several persons were now brought before him, who, but the previous moment, had considered their fate as inevitable. These he dismissed in safety to their homes. He then led off his men in triumph—it was the triumph of humanity. Fitzgerald was faithful to his word—he found the foe. The shattered ranks of the Ancient Britons can confirm the rest!

Leaving Gorey, the division entered Wicklow; and overcoming the obstacles which the British army in that quarter had opposed to its advance, encamped at Ballymanus. Whence—joined by a band, rallied under the standard of Byrne—it resumed its march, and presented itself before Hacketstown, at an early hour on the morning of the 25th of June.

The garrison had expected the attack, and formed outside the town to receive the enemy; but unable to maintain their ground, the cavalry fled; and the infantry retreating to their barracks and the cover of some adjoining houses, made a bold and vigorous defence. The United forces, exposed in the street to an incessant fire of musketry, sustained considerable loss. Every effort to dislodge the royal troops proved ineffectual; and, though their numbers were comparatively few, they fought with courage and perseverance throughout the entire day.

Amongst the prisoners who, in the early part of the action, had fallen into the hands of the United troops, were some of the wives and daughters of the officers of the garrison. These were immediately conveyed to a place of safety, and treated with that delicacy and respect which female worth and virtue should always command; and which the calumniators of our countrymen have been forced to admit was in

no instance ever violated.\* Why did not the British commander take lessons of virtue from better men than himself, and curb the excesses of a licentious soldiery, whose abominations can never be contemplated but with unmitigated feelings of horror and disgust?

The battle continued obstinate, but with little loss to the royal troops ; and though the town in many places had been fired, the garrison sustained no injury from the conflagration. To dislodge the enemy without cannon was found totally impracticable ; and the assailants, wearied out by a gallant resistance, after nine hours' conflict retired from the town, carrying off all the cattle in the neighbourhood for the supply of their camp, which they formed that evening at Blessington—a frontier town bordering on the county of Kildare. The royal troops evacuated the garrison the same night, and retreated to the town of Tullow, in the county of Carlow.

The United forces had scarcely taken the necessary repose after scenes of unremitting toil and severity, when they were again in motion—in full march back on the county of Wexford, to attack the town of Carnew. Their object was, by surprising that garrison, to gain the occupation of a post which by both armies was considered a station of the first importance. Of the success of this measure, there seemed to be every rational hope. The garrison was ignorant of the enemy's march ; and, under the impression that the Wexford forces had retired from the country, the precautionary measures of defence were neglected. But General Needham with his division was now encamped at Gorey, and having been apprised of the enemy's movement, detached a considerable force to check their advance on Carnew.

It was here that the United chiefs practised a military manoeuvre, which evinced a decided superiority over the British commander ; and here the brave Fitzgerald redeemed that pledge which he had given but a few days before, when humanity triumphed over the feelings of revenge.

The advance of the United troops was bold, and marked by that uniform celerity of movement, which often rendered their assault irresistible. Of this General Needham had ac-

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\* "In one point, I think, we must allow some praise to the rebels. Amid all their atrocities, the chastity of the fair sex was respected. I have not been able to ascertain one instance to the contrary in the county of Wexford,"—*Gordon's History of the Irish Rebellion*, p. 259.



quired knowledge by experience; and to protect Carnew from surprise and the consequences which must have inevitably followed, he threw a large body of his cavalry to intercept the enemy's line of march. These, confident in their own strength, charged on the advance of the United line, which fled. The British squadrons pursued; and, imagining the whole United force to be in retreat before them, were led into a defile, where high hedges on each side covered the enemy posted for their reception. From these they were furiously assailed, and at once thrown into confusion. They had no means of escape. The extremity of the pass was blockaded by cars, carts, and baggage, collected for the purpose, on the first moment that Needham's cavalry were observed in motion. Pressed up in those narrow limits, all was disorder—horses and men crowded together—the wounded and the dying—no resistance could be made; and numbers perished, while a death-wound was not inflicted on one of their assailants. Not a man of the United division fell!

To the impetuosity of the attack, the enemy was indebted for the preservation of those who escaped the slaughter. A considerable portion of the cavalry was of the corps of Ancient Britons, against whom the fury of the pikemen was chiefly directed. These bounding through the hedges, and compressing still closer and closer the devoted foe, the increasing weight of men and horses burst the barrier, and opened a retreat to those who must otherwise have been immolated to a man. The cavalry, in their flight, alarmed the garrison of Carnew, which had just time sufficient for arranging such measures of defence as eventually preserved it from falling into the hands of the enemy! Had Carnew fallen, Needham's division must either have been led to a general action or have abandoned Gorey.

It must appear strange, if not unaccountable, that the British commander, Lake, after what might be termed his decisive victories at Enniscorthy and Vinegar Hill, with an immense military force under his command—every garrison and post at his disposal—and with abundant supplies for a lengthened campaign, suffered a broken army to traverse the country, less in the character of fugitives than victors, assailing post after post in succession, and becoming, if possible, more formidable from defeat.

We perceive them at one moment cutting off, in the



twinkling of an eye, nearly one-half of General Needham's cavalry, without the loss of a single man in their own ranks. At another, when destruction would have seemed inevitable, forcing their way, sword in hand, through the British lines—again opposed to the royal army, attacking the British cannon, and in three repeated charges driving the enemy before their guns!

During twenty-one days this "broken, routed division" traversed, in marching and counter-marching, more than 500 miles, with scarcely one intervening day's cessation of contest.

Foiled in their attempt on Carnew, the Wexford division proceeded in a northerly direction; encountering some yeomanry forces—who, following in their line of march, had the boldness to approach their station. These were routed as soon as attacked. Two of their captains fell, and many of their numbers perished under the fury of a charge which they had the temerity to provoke. The survivors, retreating into a fortified house, defended it through the night with much firmness, and considerable loss to the assailants, who made several ineffectual attempts to dislodge them.

Generals Needham and Duff had marched with their divisions of the royal army from their respective encampments, for the purpose of surrounding the United forces, exhausted by fatigue and reduced by the casualties of war. The United troops were now proceeding in the direction of Wicklow Gap; but changing their line of march, fell back towards Gorey, and, gaining possession of an eminence, prepared for battle. Finding their force too weak to hazard an engagement with the numerous foes that were encompassing them, they attacked the advance-guard of Sir James Duff's army, and cutting a passage through a mass of cavalry by which they were surrounded, pushed forward with inconceivable rapidity to gain the favourite and important post of Carnew.

This daring action, in which General Duff's division sustained a loss in cavalry little short of 100 dragoons, was viewed with astonishment by the enemy, and regarded as one of the boldest displays of courage and skill exhibited throughout the campaign. Occupying, as usual, the elevated ground, and rallied under the ensign of their country—the last shred of tattered green which was unfurled in the Wex-

ford war—they waited the enemy's advance! Here they firmly resisted the shock of his concentrated forces—gallantly repulsing the cavalry in their charge, and thrice driving the cannoneers from their guns! After sustaining, with the most admirable courage, for nearly two hours, the unequal contest, they retired from the field; terminating, with this last eventful struggle, the glory of the Wexford campaign.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

*Retreat of the Residue of the Wexford forces of Kildare—Arrangements for new enterprise—Advance to the north of Leinster—Conflicts with the British Troops—Battle of Knightstown—Retreat to the Boyne—Deeat of the Wexford Northern Division.*

ALYMER still maintained a position in Kildare. Thither the remainder of the Wexford army retreated, under the conduct of Fitzgerald, Perry, and Byrne, and accompanied by some of the associated Wicklow forces. These men, of too ardent and enterprising a disposition to remain inactive, made incursions into some of the neighbouring districts, which proved however, unproductive of any advantage.

Wexford, inundated with British troops, was now internally subdued; and such of her chiefs as had retired from the field, were shortly after arraigned before those military tribunals which General Lake had established, in the most absolute contempt of Lord Kingsborough's treaty. It is not now the subject of disquisition, whether in that treaty his Lordship was influenced by feelings of good faith or motives of a more questionable nature. It is only from the tribunal of his own heart that judgment can be pronounced. But had he evinced any sympathy for the unfortunate sufferers—had he shown any position to mitigate, as far as his influence might have extended, the miseries in which an implicit reliance on his faith had involved men of rank, of fortune, and unquestionable truth; though his efforts might not, perhaps, have proved successful, his conduct would have been less exceptionable, and neither his honour nor humanity been compromised in the attempt. The protection of his life had been a task of no small difficulty, and often pregnant with

danger. Yet he hourly beheld, with a cold-blooded complacency, those generous-minded men led to the scaffold, to whose humane interference he was solely indebted for his preservation from popular vengeance.

Hopeless as was the situation of Wexford, Fitzgerald and Perry contemplated a last desperate effort to relieve it. Having recruited their cavalry with some of the best-bred horses, for which Kildare was celebrated, they separated from the confederates, and marched direct for the north of Leinster, at the head of a bold and determined force.

The object of this expedition was to rouse the counties of Meath and Louth to arms, and by seizing on the important passes which open to the Ulster province, there maintain a defensive war. The localities of that country were peculiarly favourable to an enterprise of this nature. There a small determined force could hold superior numbers at bay, while large armies could not be brought into action; and cannon would avail little along that impenetrable chain of mountains, intersected by deep and impervious morasses.

With the co-operation of Louth and of Meath, those chiefs considered that they would be fully competent to make head against all the royal forces to the north of the capital; and these they conceived could only be augmented by drawing reinforcements from Wexford, now the grand depot of the British army in Ireland. This was the project which Perry and Fitzgerald had contemplated; and with a spirit of enterprise which no difficulties could subdue, they indulged in the bold but fallacious hope of affording their countrymen an opportunity of recovering the lost ground which they had so long and so bravely contested.

This daring enterprise, so characteristic of those who had planned it, was entered on with all that spirit of enthusiasm which distinguished the Wexford warrior throughout his hard-fought campaign. The force consisted of 1600 men, provided with 800 horses; each horse carrying, as nearly as the nature of the arrangement would admit, a pikeman and a musketeer. The expedition presented a spectacle, which, though at other times it would have appeared singular, was by no means novel in that period of civil war—a few females on single horses, the attached wives or sisters of some beloved individuals in the ranks, from whom no fortune could separate them, or peril affright.



Quitting Kildare, the band proceeded in a northerly direction ; skirmishing with the several bodies of troops which came from the neighbouring garrisons to intercept its march ; and advancing within seven miles of the capital, forced two military stations on the north-west of the city. It is scarcely conceivable the alarm which the movement of this band excited. Many of the *ultra loyal*, who had rendered themselves but too conspicuous in their hostility to the Union of Irishmen, conceiving the day of retribution to be now at hand, implored protection from those who were known to possess popular influence ; declaring, at the same time, their sorrow for the past, and their pacific determination for the future. Some of those new political converts exceeded the most zealous of their former opponents in their loud denunciations of a Government “which had sown the seeds of discord amongst brothers, and involved their common country in ruin !”

As the Wexford band advanced, the hopes of the leaders became less sanguine. Meath did not evince that disposition which had been calculated on ; and beyond the co-operation of a few individuals, the inhabitants were in general supine, dispirited, or irresolute. Fitzgerald still encouraged the hope of reaching the northern frontier. The same feeling was supported by Perry and Kearns. The latter was the last of those intrepid clerical chiefs, whom the insupportable severities of the Camden administration had forced to the field, when their houses of worship had been burned, and their flocks dispersed by the foe, and the hand of the spoiler pressed heavy on the youthful, the aged, and the innocent. Kearns had distinguished himself in the battles of Enniscorthy and Vinegar Hill, and, devotedly attached to Perry, would not now desert the fortunes of his friend, whom he had hitherto aided by his counsel, and in many a perilous moment protected with his powerful arm.

In the medical department, the Wexford army was most deficient ; and many distressing circumstances occurred in consequence. On the present occasion there was no professional gentleman with the troops. Passing near the residence of a celebrated practitioner of the day, Dr. Edward Sheridan of Caussetstown, in the county of Meath, the chiefs, with much entreaty, solicited that gentleman to accompany them ; and, though the request of men in arms might be

considered tantamount to a command, they generously dispensed with his attendance, on his expressing the dangers to which his family would be exposed in the event of an unsuccessful issue to the expedition. Time admitted of little courtesy. A mutual expression of good feeling passed. The army proceeded on its march, and the worthy doctor was left to the enjoyment of his numerous and amiable family.

I had an interview with this excellent Irishman, not many days after. He is now no more. Intimately acquainted with his virtues, I am proud to bear my humble testimony to his worth. None of his countrymen have been more distinguished through a long and honourable life for pure and unbending patriotism—the warmest attachment to the liberties of Ireland, and an undisguised hostility to her oppressors. His superior and highly-cultivated mind displayed a large portion of that native genius, associated with the name, which has shed lustre on our country.

To the quick and discerning minds of the Wexford chiefs, it soon became evident that no efficient support could be expected, and that the expedition was already frustrated. It seemed, however, a matter of calculation with the enemy, whether the royal troops in the neighbourhood were able to turn their march. The yeomanry forces kept aloof, not daring to come in contact with the Wexford column, which in one condensed body occupied the great leading roads, enveloped in clouds of dust, which, under a sultry atmosphere, nearly precluded respiration. The band still pressed forward; the enemy manœuvring to the right or left, at a secure distance; but, fluttering like an affrighted covey, away they flew, the moment the tremendous voice of Kearns pronounced the word “Halt!” The Wexford troops resumed their march, with a cheer which re-echoed from Morgallion to the Boyne.

Perry now felt himself seriously annoyed by a body of British cavalry, which hung on his march; skirmishing at intervals with his rear, and cutting off all who, from fatigue, or the weakness of their horses, were disorderly in their files. This circumstance had compelled him to levy what fresh horses he could procure from the fields and stables of the surrounding farmers. The delay and consequent disorder was taken advantage of by the enemy; and the Wexford men found themselves briskly assailed at the moment they



were least prepared for defence. Kearns, ever on the alert, flew to remedy the evil; while Perry and Fitzgerald, halting the front, arranged their men for action.

The assault, which was now become general, was gallantly maintained, and the Wexford troops were thrown into disorder. Forced from their position, they attempted the passage of a narrow bridge, which, long in a state of decay, had been rendered partially secure by the application of timbers sufficiently strong for the general use of the country, but inadequate to support the heavy weight of cavalry which now pressed upon it. The centre plank gave way, and a horse suspended in the broken timbers rendered, in a great degree, the bridge impassable. A Wexford man, named Bryan, sprang from his saddle, and opposing himself in the narrow passage to a squadron of the enemy who pressed forward to seize on the bridge, defended it with desperate bravery. In the conflict he received seven sabre wounds, but maintained his post till the Wexford troops had rallied, charged the enemy in return, and, driving them from the field, deliberately crossed the bridge, in single file and in perfect security.

Two British divisions, under the command of Major-General Weyms and Brigadier-General Meyrick, had for some time been in pursuit of the Wexford column. The cavalry of these divisions came up on the borders of the wide-spreading bog of Knightstown, to the north of the river Boyne. The infantry had not yet reached the ground when the battle commenced, but their approach was momentarily looked for. The object of the British commander was to gain time for the arrival of his foot and artillery; that of the Wexford leaders to force an immediate action. All that the boldness and ingenuity of the adventurous soldier could devise, was resorted to by the Wexford chiefs. It was an animating display. I had the fortune to witness it.

The troops on either side evinced no lack of courage. While the Wexford men, firm and compact, repulsed the enemy on every advance, the latter manœuvred to avoid a general conflict, which it was evident they conceived themselves unable to sustain. But the prompt arrival of the reinforcements gave them at once a superiority, and Perry was forced from his position.

The bog of Knightstown, on which the Wexford forces now formed, was a widely-extended plain, intersected by



deep excavations. The intervening portions of the ground were dry and elastic, the summer of 1798 having been remarkable for a long-continued drought. On these plains they could have maintained their ground against the approaches of horse or foot, but they were altogether exposed to the enemy's artillery. The British cavalry and infantry kept aloof, while the cannon opened a tremendous fire on the Wexford lines. Not less than thirty gallant fellows fell under the first discharge! The ground of these was as promptly filled up as in the rustic sports of a holiday exercise, when the enlivening cheer, "*Shin aru, Teigheam a Bhaile*," resounds through the busy field.

Nothing now seemed wanting to ensure the total destruction of the Wexford troops, but a prolonged occupation of their position. The enemy, aware that under the most disastrous circumstances they would never contemplate a surrender, made immediate arrangements for cutting off their retreat. The cavalry and infantry forming a deep line in front of the bog, the artillery continued to ply their fire. After a bold effort to hold a position which became every moment more ruinous, Perry and Fitzgerald, who had both been wounded early in the action, charged in separate divisions at the head of their forces, broke through the enemy's line, and gaining the high road which bordered the field of action, bore down every opposition.

The British cavalry hung on the enemy's retreat, and so closely that sabre blows were frequently exchanged between the van of the one and the rear of the other. At a moment of the highest excitement and confusion, Fitzgerald's horse fell, and, endeavouring to recover, rolled on his gallant rider; who, entangled with his limb pressed under the weight of his charger, found it impossible to extricate himself from his perilous situation. A loud exclamation announced the distressing accident that "Fitzgerald was down!" And, though every man would have perished for his safety, so pressed and hurried was the movement; that numbers were urged forward without a successful effort to relieve him. Friends and foes were intermingled! "*Save Fitzgerald!*" was the general cry—but as yet no hand had raised him—when Kavanagh, one of the boldest pikemen of the Wexford band, leaping from his horse, extricated his fallen chief, and placed him in his own saddle. The spirit of the troops

revived ; they rallied round their rescued leader ; and the British forces abandoned further pursuit.

It was now that the United chiefs had a painful duty to perform, which the urgency of the moment rendered imperative. The horses were jaded by the fatigues they had encountered and the extra burdens they had borne, though the fate of warfare had relieved many from the latter. It was now evident to the most sanguine, that no hopes could be entertained of a favourable termination to the daring enterprise in which they had embarked. It was plain that an insurrectionary movement could not be effected in Meath ; and it was equally demonstrable, that with diminished numbers and exhausted supplies, a handful of brave men could not longer sustain themselves against the fresh troops which they had hourly to encounter.

In a hasty council of war, at the head of the line and in motion, it was determined to retrace their march ; and for the greater facility of retreat, that each horse should be freed from the encumbrance of a second rider ; while the dismounted pikemen, forming into a small phalanx of foot, should hasten direct to the Boyne, the appointed rendezvous for the night ; and that the cavalry, in a more circuitous route, should aid their advance, by attracting to themselves the attention of the enemy.

This determination was no sooner formed than acted on. Orders were given to halt. Kearns and Fitzgerald, standing aloof and in silence, viewed the line with subdued pride and evident feelings of sorrow ; while Perry, advancing to the front, for the first time faltered in his accents of command, when announcing the order which was to separate those brave and faithful comrades, who had borne, with unparalleled firmness, the most severe privations. He would have addressed the troops, but time would not permit. Extending his right arm, while his left hand rested on the neck of his charger—his usual attitude when most earnest in address—he pronounced, but not in his accustomed tone of command, “*Extra horsemen—Dismount !*” In a moment every horse was under the occupancy of a single rider. “*Dragoons—March !*” . . .

The dismounted pikemen gazed for a moment on their retreating comrades—a farewell cheer was exchanged—then silently and rapidly forming—apprised of the appointed rendezvous—“To the Boyne !” was shouted through the



ranks, and they pursued their route. Many in the course of the night reached the place of destination, but many perished in their endeavours to gain it. So long as the division was able to hold together it was formidable to its opponents ; but, once broken, rout and slaughter ensued.

The large fields of thick and ripening corn which covered the fertile plains on the north of the Boyne, and to the westward of Slane, afforded temporary concealment for a number of fatigued and wounded men. These fields were watched for several days with unremitting vigilance ; and wherever any motion was discernible in the standing corn, by the movement or change in position of some unfortunate creature, rendered desperate by privation, and reckless of life, a yeomanry musket was levelled to the spot, and the groan of the unhappy victim following, the loud laugh and cheer of exultation announced that the bullet had taken effect !

In this manner, little short of 100 men were coolly and deliberately massacred, some three or four days after the retreat of Perry. Others were executed by the yeomanry on Chamberstown Hill.\* A few, after almost incredible sufferings, effected their escape, but none experienced mercy who fell into the hands of the enemy.

The cavalry having reached the Boyne in safety, formed for the night on a rising ground ; the river in front, and covered on the rear by the thick plantations of the beautiful demesne of Douth. There having received such of the scattered troops as were fortunate enough to reach them in the course of the night, the leaders made a hasty muster of their forces in the morning ; and with spirits depressed, but still unsubdued, they marched from the Boyne.

Drogheda lay on their left, Slane to the right, and Navan a few miles higher up the river, in a more westerly direction. From these garrisons they encountered little interruption ; and they entered the metropolitan county with increasing feelings of confidence. But, notwithstanding their gallant bearing, fatigue, privation, the casualties of war, and the expenditure of their ammunition had reduced this once formidable column to a state bordering on defenceless. Still they pressed forward, with the hope of entering Kildare, which four hours' march would now have effected. At this

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\* In the parish of Rathkenny, county of Meath.



critical and interesting moment, they came in contact with the forces of the enemy ; who, intercepting their march at the village of Ballyboghil, ten miles north of the capital, forced them into action, and compelled them to a disorderly retreat. The victory was decisive, and the Wexford column was never again organised.

The greater portion of the scattered troops reached the counties of Wicklow and Kildare. Perry and Kearns, whom no disaster could separate, fell into the hands of the enemy a few days after, and, condemned by a military tribunal, were executed on the same scaffold. Fitzgerald regained Aylmer's lines.

The failure of this expedition proved a deadly blow to the aspiring hopes which had animated its leaders, and others not less sanguine in their expectations from the enterprise. I know it has been represented as a forlorn hope—an effort of despair ; but it was by those who were either ignorant of the design, or under the influence of that judgment which estimates the qualities of man just in proportion to his failure or success. Had those chieftains succeeded in carrying their forces to the destined point, we may infer without hazarding a rash conclusion, that their dislodgement would not have been an easy task. Little more than one short month from this period, General Humbert had landed on the western coast ; and five days afterwards General Lake was in full retreat before him, *unincumbered* by cannon or baggage ! What might have been the result, had the Irish government, at one and the same moment, been compelled to provide for the security of the north-east and north-west of the island, with an insurrectionary fire smouldering in the centre, which required only a reviving breath to rouse it to a flame ?

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## CHAPTER IX.

*Courts-Martial—Execution of Wexford Leaders—State of the Country after the Cessation of Hostilities—Amnesty violated—Exemplary conduct of British Officers—Conditions between Generals Dundas and Aylmer—Final Dispersion of the United Forces in Kildare.*

THE first object to which General Lake directed his attention after his occupation of Wexford, was the institution of courts-martial. The military investment of the country was only a

preparatory scene to one of a more deliberate system of vengeance. I shall pass lightly over the grievous and accumulated ills with which that unhappy country was generally visited; the unmitigated persecutions, the death or banishment of a numerous and influential portion of its inhabitants; and confine my narration to the misfortunes of those chiefs, with whose character the reader is already familiar.

The first who was tried and condemned by military tribunal was the Rev. Philip Roche. The treaty with Lord Kingsborough having been variously reported and imperfectly defined, Mr. Roche proceeded to Wexford, unarmed and unaccompanied by any force, to confer with the authorities in the town, and ascertain the precise nature of the treaty and the extent of the conditions guaranteed. His conspicuous person was immediately recognised by the British soldiery. Rudely assailed, and torn from his horse, he was dragged amidst their blows and insults to prison. But his spirit was superior to the ills of his condition, and when conveyed to execution, he evinced the same firmness of character which he had displayed through life, and with a manly deportment and Christian resignation he met his fate.\*

With Roche was executed Captain Matthew Keugh, than whom none ranked higher in the estimation of his countrymen, whether as a gentleman or a soldier. To the foul and unfounded assertions of those calumniators who would detract from the merits of men who proved, by their exertions in the field and their death on the scaffold, their attachment to the rights of conscience and the liberties of the human race, I would reply by adverting to those gentlemen, who, distinguished by their personal worth, the independence of their fortunes and the expansion of their minds, boldly and unhesitatingly embarked in the cause of their common country. I would repel too, by one simple argument, the unjust and ungenerous charge, that "resistance to oppression was the effervescence of sectarian zeal." Harvey, Perry, Keugh, Grogan, Grey, and others conspicuous in the Wexford campaign, were conscientious members of the Established Church. Courted by a domineering ascendancy, and

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\* "His behaviour in the rebellion," observes the Rev. Mr. Gordon, "has convinced me that he possessed a humane and generous heart, with an uncommon share of personal courage."—*Hist. Ir. Reb.* p. 399.



eligible to all the honours and emoluments which under its monopolising influence they might have expected to obtain, they cast behind them the prejudice of earlier times ; and, outstepping the line which unjust and impolitic laws had drawn between them and their less-favoured fellow-citizens, they united against the common oppressors of their country, and forfeited their lives and their fortunes for the emancipation of her sons. But this invidious and illiberal charge, which scarcely merits a serious refutation, cannot stand one moment the test of public scrutiny. We turn to the records of NINETY-EIGHT, and there trace the most distinguished characters of the day, of every Christian communion and religious creed, sinking the distinctive name of partizan or sectarian, in the proud appellation of IRISHMAN, and forming one great national bond of fraternal union.

Beauchamp Bagnal Harvey, Cornelius Grogan,\* John Kelly, John Henry Colclough, and Esmond Kyan, were successively led to the scaffold. Many and deeply interesting circumstances were connected with the fate of these gentlemen, which space will not permit me to enlarge upon. That of Colclough was marked by some of the most interesting traits, peculiar to the romantic spirit of the times, of which the unhappy situation of Ireland afforded many illustrations. He was young and of high family.† Favoured by nature and improved by education, he was distinguished by those intellectual and personal accomplishments which render the possessor estimable to society. His amiable and interesting wife, whose soul was congenial with his own, participating in attachment to country, and the enthusiasm of the cause which her husband had embraced, shared with him all the perils and privations to which his adverse fortune had impelled him. After the surrender of Wexford and the violation of

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\* Mr. Cornelius Grogan was advanced in years, and of feeble constitution. His age and infirmities disqualified him for the duties of the field, and he was appointed, his wishes and feelings not having been consulted, Commissary-General to the Wexford forces. But his property was an alluring object to men in power. He possessed great personal wealth, and landed estates amounting to £8000 per annum. These were confiscated ; and a bill of attainder at the same time passed by the legislature, sequestrating also the estates of Mr. Bagnal Harvey, producing at that period a rental of about £3000 a-year.

† For many years representatives of the county of Wexford in the Irish Parliament.



Lord Kingsborough's treaty, they took refuge in a solitary cave in one of the Saltee Islands off the Wexford coast ; and there, with their infant child, secluded from the world, they might have enjoyed a temporary security, had not ill fortune conducted Harvey for shelter to the same sequestered spot. The small bark which conveyed this gentleman from the shore having been observed by the enemy, the unhappy exiles were captured, and conveyed, with a display of military triumph, to the town of Wexford. The fond and faithful wife of Colclough would not be separated from her husband in misfortune. She followed him to the dungeon !—In a little time to the tomb !

The executions of the Wexford leaders were attended with circumstances gross and disgusting in their nature. The sentence of a court, whether civil or military, when carried into execution, has generally been considered sufficient for the ends of justice ; but on these occasions, after the extreme penalty had been exacted, an unmanly triumph was displayed in the indulgence of feelings, low, vengeful, and disgraceful. The bodies of the sufferers, after the usual ceremony of mutilation, and the impalement of the heads, which were exhibited on pikes in the most conspicuous quarters of the town, were stript of their clothing, and exposed to public view ; and having encountered every indignity which vulgar brutality could devise, they were thrown, like carrion heaps, into the ebbing tide !\* Thus perished those chiefs, who, resting on the faith of a treaty, in an ill-timed moment relinquished their arms. Had they contemplated the consequences which followed, they would have retained them in the iron grasp of death ; and the conquest of Wexford would have been the conquest of a desert.

With the exception of a very few, none of the Wexford leaders had previously been accustomed to arms. Many of them in the enjoyment of ample fortune, had not contemplated resistance to ministerial oppression, until they had witnessed the increasing ills which that abandoned policy produced. Though attached to the liberties of their country and characteristically brave, they had not associated them-

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\* The body of Colclough alone received sepulchral rites. At the importunate solicitations of his distracted wife, it was given up, by General Lake, for interment.

selves in the general bond of union for the redress of national wrongs. But they beheld the blaze of the incendiary—they heard the shriek of despair—they witnessed the violation of virtue, and the oppression of the weak. Their lofty souls never balanced between peril and safety. They forsook the sweets of domestic peace for the broils of the field—the luxuries of the mansion for the privations of the camp. On the spur of the moment they organised a peasant force, capable of combatting hand to hand with veteran troops; and won a renown in arms, seldom of hasty acquirement even with science and courage combined. It was then that the military genius of Ireland burst the bonds rivetted by centuries of oppression, and fresh in the vigour of youth, rallied her sons to the field. Not forty-eight hours in arms, and we see disciplined troops flying before them. British generals foiled in succession—towns captured—garrisons surprised—armies of relief driven back, or cut off in the advance, and the thunder of artillery silenced by the charge of the pike.

What proofs are these of the mental and physical powers which a combined population can display when thrown on their own resources! what a warning to our rulers not to prefer a government of force to the affections of the people!

After her leaders had perished and her population been disarmed, Wexford presented a melancholy picture of a conquered province. The worst passions of the human breast were indulged in the exercise of the most tyrannical oppression. Plots were fabricated by the self-interested and designing; and while the local despot wreaked his vengeance on the defenceless of his own neighbourhood, he leagued with others, possessing greater powers of mischief, in the contemplation of a more extended scale of outrage.

The amnesty which had been proclaimed under the authority of the Marquis Cornwallis, who had succeeded Lord Camden in the vice-royalty of Ireland, afforded little security. Numbers of unfortunate men, who had received written protections from British general officers, were shot by the army and yeomanry in contempt of the proclamation under which they had surrendered.\* Arbitrary contributions were

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\* "The rebels," said Mr. Dobbs, "for a time lost all confidence in government protections. This was owing to several of them being shot with protections in their pockets, though unarmed, and though no new offence had been committed by them. He had his information from



levied.\* The property of rebels was regarded as public plunder,† and many, who had escaped the pillage of the enemy, became victims to the rapacity of individuals, whose rank in life and official situation gave a more atrocious feature to these foul transactions. To such excess was this system of outrage carried, that Wexford seemed on the verge of a second convulsion.

Happily for that distracted county, there were found, amongst the British commanders, men who possessed with a discriminating judgment a benevolence of disposition.‡ They had witnessed the courage of the enemy in the field, and, brave and magnanimous themselves, they respected those qualities in others. When permitted the exercise of a discretionary authority, they displayed a becoming feeling of humanity in protecting the oppressed, restraining the ferocity of the soldiery, checking the magisterial despot in his tyrannical course,§ and interposing between the murderous yeoman

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undoubted authority. He had lately come from the camp of Email, commanded by General Moore, where those particulars were made known to him. One instance was that of a Mr. Fenton, who belonged to a yeomanry corps, and for whose apprehension he saw General Moore sign advertisements offering one hundred guineas reward."—*Extract from the Speech of Mr. Dobbs in the Irish House of Commons, 15th August 1798.*

\* Provision was made by Parliament for compensation to the loyalists who suffered in property during the rebellion of 1798. From this fund, considerably more than half a million of money was claimed by those in the county of Wexford alone! Ample compensation, we should presume, without having recourse to arbitrary contributions.

† "I mean not to throw blame on any who, unpremeditatedly, and without neglect of their duty, shared the plunder of houses of reputed rebels consigned to military depredation. Thus, doubtless, Lord Kingsborough thought his conduct blameless, when he went, the day after his liberation from Wexford, to Mr. Cornelius Grogan's house, and took out of the stable two coach-horses to sell. But if we should find the attention of any general officer so absorbed in a system of plunder as to leave him no leisure for fighting, perhaps we might think him not entirely blameless."—*Gordon's Hist. Irish Rebell. p. 239.*

‡ General Moore and General Hunter were distinguished for their humane and soldier-like conduct.

§ Mr. O'Donnell asserted, "as a fact of his own knowledge, the apprehension of some persons, who had come in under the proclamation, by a magistrate of the country; and though these men had in their pockets the sealed protection of Lord Castlereagh, it was disregarded by the magistrate, and those men threatened with prosecution and death if they dared to stay a single day at their own homes!"—*Extract from Mr. O'Donnell's Speech in the Irish House of Commons, 31st July, 1798.*



and the defenceless peasant. To the prudence and humanity of these officers was Wexford indebted for the preservation of an extensive district,\* whose entire population had been marked for destruction. The infernal plot failed, but the contrivers and abettors were not punished.

The suppression of Wexford and the accumulating force of the royal army in Ireland leaving no hopes in a prolonged resistance, Aylmer entered into military conditions with the British General Dundas. These conditions, honourable to the Kildare chief, and favourable to the troops for whose interests he stipulated, were "Security in person and property to the superior officers, with permission to retire to any country not in hostility with England, and a full amnesty and oblivion of the past to all his other fellow-soldiers in arms." The first of these conditions extended to the two surviving Wicklow and Wexford chiefs, Byrne and Fitzgerald. These, with Aylmer and the officers of his staff, were conveyed prisoners of war to Dublin, preparatory to their emigration from Ireland. The subalterns and privates returned to their homes.

Aylmer, who was devoted to military pursuits, proceeded to the continent after his enlargement from the Castle of Dublin, and, entering into the Austrian army, met with rapid promotion. Many years after, when the Austrian cavalry was regarded as a model of perfection by the continental states, the Regent of England solicited from the Emperor the services of an experienced officer, for the instruction of the British cavalry in that system of tactics which had rendered his squadrons the admiration of the military world. The Emperor acceded to the request, and the officer whom he selected for this important service was William Aylmer!

Aylmer arrived in England, executed his commission, was honoured with the approbation of the highest personages in the state, and presented with a splendid token of royal favour. But the prejudice of other times was revived, when in the person of the Austrian officer was recognised the rebel chief, who twenty years before had marshalled the United forces on the plains of Kildare; and Aylmer returned to the land of his nativity, the modest, the unassuming, but still devoted patriot.

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\* A populous district in the county of Wexford, denominated "The Macomores Territory."

When Columbia had arisen, and the illustrious Bolivar was giving freedom to the regions of the west, Aylmer embraced so alluring a cause with all the enthusiasm of his more juvenile years. Embarking at the head of a fine regiment of his countrymen, seven hundred strong, he steered for the shores of Venezuela. He landed on the burning sands of Margareta, and survived those hardships which proved fatal to so many of his countrymen. He was quickly distinguished by his military talents, and won the personal esteem of the LIBERATOR. But by a fatality, which attended most of the European officers in that service, his hopes and his prospects were blighted. He perished under the influence of malignant fever, the result of arduous service and unremitting solicitude for the glory of the Columbian republic.

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## CHAPTER X.

### *Amnesty Bill—Courts-Martial and Executions.*

ON the retirement of the Kildare troops from the field, the military force of the Union ceased to be operative, with the exception of some small but daring bands, which continued to occupy fastnesses in the Wicklow mountains.

The removal of Lord Camden from the administration of Ireland afforded hopes of a milder system; and, agreeable to the usual policy pursued by Britain towards this distracted country, the Marquis Cornwallis was sent amongst us, to conciliate those feelings which his predecessor had outraged. The Bill of Amnesty followed. This measure came recommended from the throne, in a message from his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant, to the Commons House of Parliament. The following is an extract from that message, as announced to the House by Lord Castlereagh, on Tuesday, the 17th of July, 1798:—"Notwithstanding the abhorrence which his Majesty justly entertains for the present unnatural rebellion raging in this country, yet wishing to exercise his royal prerogative of mercy, and by lenient means to bring back to a sense of their duty those deluded from their allegiance, his Majesty holds forth a free pardon and oblivion for all past offences, with such exceptions and conditions as shall

be deemed absolutely necessary to the public safety; and has affixed his royal signature to a bill for that purpose, which he has ordered to be laid before the House for its consideration."

Whilst in the mild spirit of British jurisprudence penal statutes are interpreted in the sense least oppressive to the subject, acts of clemency, in their administration, are never supposed to fall short of the limits prescribed. It was in this sense, therefore, that a too confiding people anticipated the merciful dispensation of that measure which was recommended by the Crown, and confirmed by an enactment of the Irish Legislature. They had seen, by a recent Act\* of the same Legislature, the magisterial delinquent screened from justice, and the murderer and incendiary protected from the penalties of the law; and they naturally concluded that the Parliament which could indemnify the men who had perpetrated those crimes would be inclined to extend its fullest pardon to those who had resisted them. Many, therefore, on the faith of the "bill of amnesty and oblivion of the past," surrendered their arms and claimed the protection of the law.

But there was a condition in the bill, which excluded from its merciful provisions those who were designated *Leaders*. This gave a wide latitude, and was, in fact, a sweeping denunciation against all within the circle of the Union who were most conspicuous for public integrity and moral worth; for it was these qualities which produced popular influence, and the exercise of that influence was at once constructed into the ground of exclusion from mercy. Thus, while in the opinion of the enemies of conciliation the bill embraced too wide a sphere of mercy, in its application it fell far short of public expectancy. To charge a proscribed individual

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\* "A bill to indemnify those persons who acted for the public service in suppressing insurrection, since the 1st of June, 1797" (nearly an entire year before the insurrection commenced). This bill was warmly opposed in its progress through the House by Sir John Freke, Mr. Dobbs, and Mr. Tigh, "on the grounds of its tending to interrupt the course of justice, and to protect persons guilty of crimes, against the punishment which they had incurred." "A bill," said Mr. Plunkett, "which went to indemnify certain magistrates for outrages committed in violation of all law, professedly for the public good; and which deprived the injured of all redress or indemnification for the injuries sustained, on the same account, from those very magistrates."—See *Irish Parliamentary Debates*.



with leadership was to ensure the conviction of the accused; for that phrase was so indefinite that it required little ingenuity to establish the crime. Evidence was seldom wanting. Numbers were sacrificed on the testimony of the most notorious informers, without even the formula of an oath to give solemnity to the conviction, and many were victims on the informations of those whose properties or lives they had protected at the risk of their own. It was in vain for the accused to plead the general Act of Amnesty in his favour: he was tauntingly replied to, "That Act made no provision for his safety—he was a Leader." And this charge required no better proof than the humane influence he had exercised for the preservation of the wretch who would otherwise have fallen a victim to popular vengeance.\*

To whatever side we turned at this period, the prospect was equally appalling before us. Military tribunals on the one hand—where the stranger sat in judgment on the native, the sole arbiter of his liberty and his life; civil tribunals on the other—where the ermine of justice was intermixed with the livery of war†—pronounced judgment without mercy on those who were doomed to the penalties attendant on unsuccessful insurrection. Though many of our countrymen had suffered under the judgments of those tribunals, there were others, long incarcerated in prison, whom it was the policy of Government to respite while the battle remained doubtful. But a holocaust was now to be made to the

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\* "The display of humanity by a rebel was, in general, in trials by court-martial, by no means regarded as a circumstance in favour of the accused; strange as it may seem in times of cool reflection, it was very frequently urged as a proof of guilt. Whoever could be proved to have saved a loyalist from assassination, his house from burning, or his property from plunder, was considered as having influence among the rebels, consequently a rebel commander. This has been by some supposed to have arisen from a policy in government to discourage all ideas of humanity in rebels, that in case of another insurrection, they might be so completely sanguinary as to render themselves and their cause as odious as possible, and consequently unsupported."—*Gordon's Hist. Rebell.* p. 228.

† *Court of King's Bench.*—Mr. Justice Downes informed the bar and the attorneys, that the dress to be required of them was a *military* one, excepting only the King's law officers, who were at liberty to move in their professional attire. Similar regulations were observed in the other courts. The juries, the bar, and the attorneys were, almost without exception, in military uniform.—*Law Reports.*

offended majesty of power, and the crimes of a nation to be expiated by the blood of many victims.

Orr, who was the first martyr to the cause of Union,\* had been recommended to mercy by a repentant jury. Hence the tedious formalities of justice, in the ordinary commissions or courts of assize, were subsequently superseded by the more prompt proceedings of martial law. This afforded every facility to the Pitt and Castlereagh system of legislation for Ireland which an active ministry could desire, and freed the viceroy from importunate appeals to the mercy of the crown and the unhappy victim from the heart-sickening state of "hope deferred." Many a noble-hearted Irishman was borne to an untimely grave, unprepared for his defence and unconscious of his crime, ere his family or friends had been apprised of his impeachment. Trial, conviction, and execution were often the work of the same hour. The House of Legislative Assembly was converted into a military provost! and, while Lord Castlereagh announced in the Commons the Camden proclamation, which consigned his whole country to the merciful dispensation of martial law, a military tribunal sat under the same roof, pronouncing judgment of death on his unfortunate fellow-citizens.†

It were not only a painful but a superfluous task, to particularize the many individuals of respectable station and connexion in life, who perished under sentence of the several courts-martial in the different towns and villages, the camps and military stations, throughout the country. Suspicion or misrepresentation often constituted the guilt of the accused, and the fatal effects of those hasty decisions were sometimes deplored when it was too late to redress the evil. The lamented fate of Sir Edward Crosbie, who was as universally

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\* Mr. William Orr, a respectable inhabitant of the county of Antrim, was the first who suffered under the Insurrection Act, statute 36, Geo. III. Tried and convicted at Carrickfergus in the summer assizes, 1797, he was thrice respited and finally executed on the 14th of October same year. For the deeply interesting particulars connected with his condemnation and execution, see *Appendix*.

† In the public press of the day (25th May, 1798), we read the proceedings of a court-martial, which sat in the *Committee-room of the House of Commons*, before which Messrs. Ledwich and Wade, two members of the Rathfarnham cavalry, were tried for rebellion. These gentlemen were convicted, taken to the Queen's Bridge (where a temporary gallows was erected), and hanged.



as justly esteemed, may be regarded as illustrative of this position ;\* and public sympathy was seldom more deeply excited than in the misfortunes of Mr. Esmonde, a gentleman of high mental acquirements, whose personal worth and amiable manners endeared him to society, and would, at a period of less excitement, have disarmed the hostility of those who were most opposed to his political opinions.

Although hostilities on the part of the people ceased, courts-martial were multiplied. Civil and military tribunals exercised a criminal jurisdiction, at one and the same moment, independently of each other. Jails, tenders, and military provosts were again crowded with prisoners ; while on the highways and bridges were exhibited, *in terrorem populi*, the scaffolds of death. It were not, perhaps, too high a calculation to estimate the aggregate of those who perished during the disastrous period of NINETY-EIGHT, whether in the field or on the scaffold, by the hand of torture or the pestilence of the prison, at the appalling number of *a hundred thousand men!*†

With whatever apparent feeling of humanity the British minister may have recommended, and the Irish Government promulgated a general amnesty at the close of this calamitous war, we have strong grounds for believing that mercy was not the sole motive to that *act of grace*. The important object for the attainment of which Ireland had been coerced into convulsion was still held in view. But though our country was deluged with blood, humbled by defeat, weakened and paralysed by a fruitless struggle, the spirit of freedom had not fled, nor was national honour extinct in the bosom of Ireland's sons. Thousands of her best and bravest had fallen, but she still possessed those who were capable of rousing the languid energies of the people ; men too proud to

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\* See Appendix.

† The loss in fight bore no proportion with the massacre of prisoners, the defenceless and unarmed. Of the loss sustained by the royal troops, it is impossible, from the nature of the returns, in some instances altogether suppressed, to form any accurate estimate : add to this, hourly reinforcements from England, Scotland, and Wales, operated against that sensible show in the diminution of numbers which it was the interest of government to conceal. We know that, after the insurrection, the most vigorous measures were resorted to for recruiting the army ; and immense numbers of men, selected from the several prisons, were compelled to join the ranks.



behold their country a province, and too honest not to interpose between the vendor and the purchaser of her rights. These were to be removed ! The country was placed in the hands of a faction, which was suffered to triumph for an hour ; and while the dupes to ministerial artifice called for judgment on the men who would have possessed the firmness to resist the deep-leagued conspiracy against Ireland's independence, they hastened the moment of her fall and facilitated the work of her betrayer.

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## CHAPTER XI.

*Treason of Reynolds—Arrest of the Leinster Delegates—Special Commission—State Trials—Henry and John Sheares—M'Cann—Byrne and Bond—Negotiations with Government.*

THOMAS REYNOLDS was a man of engaging address and respectable rank in society. His fortune, at one time considerable, had latterly suffered some diminution ; but the blood of his fellow-countrymen was now to float him to affluence. His early connection with the Union, and confidential intercourse with the gallant and unsuspecting Lord Edward Fitzgerald, enabled him, by his apostacy, to strike a blow of deep and deadly consequence. His treason was planned with a cool and deliberate precision, and the result was commensurate with the treacherous design.

The province of Leinster had appointed delegates to meet in general committee, in the city of Dublin, on the 12th of March, 1798 ; and Reynolds was deputed one of the confidential number. The place selected for meeting was the house of Mr. Oliver Bond, where the delegates were admitted on a pass-word or countersign known only to their own body. No suspicion could be harboured, no doubts entertained of the integrity of men selected for this confidential trust.

Reynolds, who had previously betrayed the confidence of his countrymen, absented himself from this meeting. He had received, in reward of his treachery, or in earnest of further favours, the sum of five hundred guineas ; and, in return, he communicated the fatal countersign. A conf

dential servant of Government personated a delegate of the province; his right of admission was not questioned, and he entered as a member of the general committee. A military guard was in attendance—escape or resistance was equally impracticable, and the Leinster delegates, surrounded by bayonets, were marched to prison. Reynolds remained unsuspected, and continued, for a time, to hold personal intercourse with the United Leaders. He then returned to the county of Kildare, where he again associated with the United Irish societies, and the officers under his command.

“The steps to vice are progressive,” and we are told that men rarely at once become villains. If we are to credit the sworn testimony of Mr. Reynolds, he stipulated, in the first stage of his political delinquency, that he should not be required to prosecute those whom he was about to betray; for he had not as yet become indifferent to appearances, nor to the odium and the danger attendant on the character of a public informer; while he had the weakness to imagine, or he affected to believe, that he could at the same time enjoy the wages of his apostacy and the confidence of his countrymen—the fruits of his guilt, without exposure to public infamy.

The fatal commission of Oyer and Terminer opened, on the 14th of July, with the trial of Henry and John Sheares, whose arrest was a considerable time subsequent to that of the Leinster Delegates. These gentlemen were convicted of high treason and rebellion, on the informations of John Warnford Armstrong, a captain in his Majesty's King's County regiment of militia, and executed on the following day.\*

And now Reynolds commenced his part in the bloody drama. The city was horror-struck on his appearance, and the extent of the anticipated evil few men had the firmness to contemplate. If regarded with composure by any, it was only by those devoted Irishmen, who, deeply committed in their country's fortune, felt little desire to survive her fate. The first victim to his apostacy was John M'Cann,† whose trial was not the less memorable that it occurred on Tuesday,

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\* For the trial of these unfortunate gentlemen, whose fate was the subject of deep and unfeigned regret, *see Appendix.*

† The cool and determined courage of M'Cann—his zeal and heroic fidelity—were subjects of the highest eulogy to his fellow-citizens.

the 17th of July, the very day on which his Majesty's message of mercy was delivered to the Commons in Parliament by Lord Castlereagh, and on the recommendation of which a bill of amnesty and oblivion of past offences became a statute of the realm.

On the 20th of July, William Michael Byrne and Oliver Bond were placed at the bar. They were confronted by Reynolds, tried, and condemned for high treason. These gentlemen, than whom none were more revered by their countrymen for their pure and inflexible patriotism, were distinguished for the disinterested friendship which subsisted between them. Byrne was young, of high Catholic family, of ardent and aspiring mind, mild and gentle manners, but "an enthusiastic rebel." Bond, more advanced in years, was in the vigour of manhood. Large and successful speculations in commerce had placed him in the first rank of mercantile influence. His mind was as expanded as his fortune, and he possessed a firmness of soul which no tyranny could awe. He was one of the first founders of the Union, and amongst the myriads who embraced that cause, there was not a form more manly or a heart more sincere. On hearing the verdict of the jury, Byrne turned to his friend, and grasping his hand, with a look of triumph, he exclaimed, "Bond, we shall be free men to-morrow!" Even in those days of blood the Court could not witness the scene unmoved. The bench and crown lawyers, while they "lamented the fatal perversion of talents and mental endowments, which, if properly directed, would have been the pride and the ornament of society, could not refuse a just tribute to the manly virtues of the dignified mind."\*

The time appointed for Bond's execution was two days later than that on which Byrne was to suffer. It was the request of the former to be permitted to die at the same hour and on the same scaffold with his friend, but this was not acceded to.

Byrne was executed on Wednesday the 25th of July. The following passage, which I copy from the writings of one of his fellow-prisoners,† will not, I presume, be uninteresting to my readers:—

"Mr. Byrne was of one of the first families of the country, and among his relatives had many friends, who, without his

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\* State Trials.

† Dr. MacNeven



knowledge, exerted their interest to preserve his life. They were told that if he would express regret at being a United Irishman, and declare that he was seduced by Lord Edward Fitzgerald, he should be forgiven. When this proposal was made known to him, he spurned it with abhorrence. He declared that he had no regret but that of not leaving his country free; that he was never seduced to be an United Irishman, and least of all by that hallowed character whose memory they wished to traduce. 'Perhaps,' said he, 'they intend to rob his children of his inheritance; but my existence shall never be disgraced by giving sanction to so base a design.' This young man having a strong sense of religion, received its rites with a cheerful hope and an assured conscience, expressing the greatest consolation at quitting life in his perfect senses, with leisure for previous preparation, and in so virtuous a cause. His very adversaries were forced to admire and do homage to that cause which produced such martyrs. So complete was the self-possession and delicacy of his mind, that in passing to the scaffold by the window of Mr. Bond's apartment, where Mrs. Bond was then with her husband, he stooped so low as not to be seen by her, lest he should alarm the feelings of a wife and a mother, at that moment trembling for all that she held dear.

"If the repetition of things that are become familiar by use could astonish, the demeanour and fortitude of that young man, from his condemnation to his execution, might be truly called astonishing. He was not only undaunted and unmoved, but he was collected, cheerful, and happy. He had hazarded his life in a good cause, and was determined, by publicly manifesting the enthusiasm with which he would die, to give resolution to the timid, and constancy to the brave. Fortified by the examples of those who mounted the scaffold before him, he went, perhaps, to the utmost bounds of magnanimity, and put it out of the power of those who followed to surpass him."

During the short period which intervened between the condemnation and execution of Mr. Byrne, a negotiation was entered into between some of the state prisoners, then confined in Dublin, and the more active members of the Council who composed Lord Cornwallis's government.\* The original outline of that negotiation was designed to stop the further effusion of blood, and, in an especial manner, to preserve the lives of William Michael Byrne and Oliver Bond; while the prisoners who subscribed to the agreement engaged (without in any manner whatsoever implicating others) to give every information in their power connected

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\* A detail of this negotiation will be found in *Appendix*.

with the formation and proceedings of the Union, and to emigrate to such country as should be agreed on between them and the Government. *Pending this negotiation Byrne was executed!* Bond was respited, and finally reprieved. But even with regard to him, the humane intentions of his fellow-prisoners were frustrated. He died in prison.

Whatever opinion might have existed as to the expediency of the measure, the men who negotiated this arrangement with Government, ranked too high in the estimation of their country to admit a doubt of the purity of their motives or the disinterestedness of their views; distinguished as they were by their talents and their sufferings, and devotedly attached to the liberties of their country.

Various pretexts were resorted to by the Government for delay in the fulfilment of their part of the treaty with the prisoners, some of whom remained incarcerated for four years in direct violation of the agreement. Fort George, a solitary fortress of Inverness-shire, on the western coast of Scotland, was the scene of their long suffering.

Amongst many personal friends there immured, whom living I esteemed, or for whose memory I bear the most unfeigned respect, were Thomas Russell, Samuel Nelson, John Sweetman, Arthur O'Connor, Thomas Addis Emmet, and William James M'Neven. These self-devoted patriots too soon perceived that the sacrifices they had made were neither propitiatory to the extent they had contemplated, nor productive of those measures to which the faith of Lord Cornwallis's government had been pledged. Courts-martial continued.\* The same hostile feeling was still manifested against Ireland's repose. A bill was framed, and hurried through Parliament, avowedly for carrying into effect the agreement entered into between the state prisoners and the Government; but it was a bill, in its recitals, replete with misrepresentations and falsehoods. The banishment clause included not only those individuals who had subscribed to the agreement, but others whom the coercive measures of Lord Camden's administration had previously driven from their country; thus subjecting men, without trial or impeachment, to all the penalties of a precipitate, vengeful, and unconstitutional law.

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\* These were not finally dissolved until after the Legislative Union.



Against many who would not subscribe to the "merciful conditions" of Government and embrace voluntary exile, fresh severities were exercised; and no measure, however vexatious, was omitted that could add to the rigours of their situation. Some, therefore, yielding under the pressure, sought relief from interminate persecution in perpetual banishment.

Ireland was now reduced to that situation which the British Minister could view with complacency. Districts desolated by the ravages of war! her population disarmed! her leaders fallen! Of those who survived the slaughter of the field, or escaped death on the scaffold, some were doomed to an eternal separation from their country; others, in a state of political outlawry, in painful incertitude awaited their fate. At this period of national gloom and despondency, hope for a moment revived: a French squadron appeared off the western coast.

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## CHAPTER XII.

*Landing of the French under General Humbert—Capture of Killalla and Ballina—Battle of Castlebar and Defeat of General Lake—Battle of Colooney—Rapid Progress of Humbert—Arrival of Lord Cornwallis and Concentration of the British Forces—Battle of Ballynamuck and Surrender of the French—Recapture of Killalla, etc.—Departure of Humbert and his Army as Prisoners of War—Detention of Teeling and Tone.*

OF the several armaments equipped by the French Republic for Ireland, the only force destined to make a landing on her shores was that small veteran band, which, I have already informed the reader, was stationed at Rochelle, under General Humbert. Hardy remained at the head of 3000 troops at Brest, Kilmaine commanding the army of reserve 10,000 strong.

Preparatory to his embarkation, Humbert had difficulties of no trifling nature to contend with. Owing either to the supineness of the directory or the low state of the exchequer, he was totally deficient in money and necessaries for his troops; but the indomitable spirit of the soldier surmounted



every obstacle. Impatient of delay, and without waiting the co-operation of others, he hurried his slender expedition to sea, and, on the 22d day of August, anchored in the Bay of Killalla.

The whole force of this invading army, which spread consternation throughout the British realm, consisted of about 1000 men, a few pieces of light artillery, with an extra quantity of arms and ammunition. But slender as was this force, the discipline of the troops, the ardour of the officers, and the devoted zeal of the Commander compensated, as far as these qualities could be rendered available, for the paucity of numbers; and had it been promptly supported,\* even in the then discomfited state of Ireland, it would have given a new complexion to her affairs.

Humbert was a man of military reputation, of bold and hardy enterprise, and admirably qualified for the most daring pursuits. He had imbibed a warm attachment to Ireland in the school of his great master Hoche, under whom he distinguished himself in the La Vendean war, and whose expedition he subsequently accompanied to Bantry Bay in the winter of 1796. He had selected as his aid-de-camp in the present expedition a young officer, who had likewise received the first lessons of military science from, and was honoured by the friendship of the "Pacificator of La Vendee." He was the elder brother of the author. He was a refined scholar, and the mildness of his manners and his patrician bearing, as the French minister expressed it, formed a pleasing contrast to the blunt and soldier-like deportment of the republican General. Two other Irishmen accompanied this expedition—Captain Matthew Tone, brother to the celebrated Theodore Wolfe Tone, and O'Sullivan, a gentleman from the South of Ireland, who had the good fortune to escape the fatality of the campaign.

Without waiting the final debarkation of his troops, Humbert ordered General Sarrazin, the second in command, to press forward with the grenadiers, who were the first on shore, and to storm the town of Killalla. The order was promptly executed, and in two hours the head-quarters of the French army were established in the Episcopal palace.

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\* The expedition under General Hardy did not leave France until the 20th September, nearly seven weeks subsequent to the embarkation of Humbert.

From Killalla Humbert marched on the following morning with a small detachment to Ballina ; leaving the main body of his troops to receive and arm the peasantry of the country who flocked to his standard. The celerity of his approach, and the terror which his landing had inspired, procured him an easy conquest. After some opposition, the garrison, a portion of which consisted of veteran cavalry, fled ; and Humbert, leaving a small force to maintain possession of the town, returned to his head-quarters at Killalla.

The orderly conduct of the French troops, their temperance, their strict discipline,\* their determined opposition to every species of plunder and outrage, and the generous protection which they were at all times disposed to extend even to those who were not identified in the cause of their allies, could not fail to make a favourable impression, when contrasted with the conduct of the British soldiery in the recent contest, throughout those quarters of Ireland where their advance or retreat was uniformly marked by fire and devastation.

The attention of the French General was now directed to the establishment of such civil authorities as might ensure domestic tranquillity, and maintain confidence and order amongst all classes of the community in the town and surrounding districts ; while the officers and soldiers under his command were employed in organizing the peasantry, cultivating, at the same time, by the courtesy of their deportment, the good feeling of those who were more hostile to the views and the object of their expedition.

The capture of Killalla and subsequent engagements placed several prisoners, some of respectable rank, in the hands of Humbert ; these were treated with that kind and considerate attention which their situation demanded ; the

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\* “Intelligence, activity, temperance, patience, to a superior degree, appeared to be combined in the soldiery that came over with Humbert, together with the strictest obedience to discipline. . . . Humbert desired him (the Bishop) to be under no apprehension ; himself and all his people should be treated with respectful attention, and nothing should be taken by the French troops but what was absolutely necessary for their support : a promise which, as long as these troops continued in Killalla, was most religiously observed.”—See “*Narrative of what passed at Killalla during the French Invasion*,” a work of which the Right Rev. Dr. Stock, Bishop of Killalla, is universally admitted to be the author.



Episcopal palace being, at the same time, the head-quarters of the invading army, the asylum of the timid, and the residence of the Bishop and his numerous family.\*

Having made the necessary arrangements for the defence of Killalla, and left a garrison of 200 Frenchmen, with a number of native auxiliaries for its support, Humbert proceeded with the main body of his army to Ballina. After a short halt, he marched to attack Castlebar, the metropolitan town of the county, the garrison of which, at all times considerable, was now augmented to a force of 6000 men, with 18 pieces of cannon, under the command of Lieutenant-General Lake.

Humbert advanced with a confidence which was well calculated to inspire the same feeling in others. His army consisted of 700 French soldiers, with about an equal number of the undisciplined peasantry, some of whom, in their remote and unfrequented mountains, had never perhaps, until that day, heard the report of a musket, much less the fearful explosion of cannon. He directed his line of march through the rough and almost impervious passes of the mountain, where horses were frequently altogether unserviceable in the conveyance of his ammunition-waggons and cannon, which were dragged forward by the peasantry with much cheerfulness but severe toil. His artillery was confined to two currie guns, and even the encumbrance of these was attended with serious interruption to his march; in consequence of the carriages breaking down, one was left behind, while the other was borne forward on handspikes.

The British General, waiting the arrival of the French, had never dreamt of their approach from this unexpected quarter; nor would he credit the report of his picquet guards, who apprised him of the enemy's advance through the mountain.

After a fatiguing march of fifteen hours without a moment's halt, Humbert appeared with the early morning, on the heights of Castlebar, reconnoitering the British army strongly

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\* "Besides the entire use of other apartments during the stay of the French in Killalla, the attic storey, containing a library and three bed-chambers, continued sacred to the Bishop and his family—and so scrupulous was the delicacy of the French not to disturb the female part of the family, that not one of them was ever seen to go higher than the middle floor."—*Narrative, Killalla, etc.*



posted between him and the town. The French General availed himself of every advantage which the situation of his ground afforded. It was intersected by stone walls, forming field enclosures, behind which he posted a number of his men in small divisions. Others were covered by craggy rocks, which afforded shelter to his musketry and enabled him to fire with considerable effect on the enemy, whose extended line was regularly formed, but who had not contemplated that species of warfare.

The British outposts were driven in; but as the French army gained ground in advance, the enemy's artillery repulsed on the moment the irregular troops, while the veteran soldiers, by their steady discipline and utter contempt of danger, endeavoured to arouse in the bosoms of their companions that feeling of courage and confidence which never deserted their own. The French Grenadiers charged the enemy's line, and were supported by a second division which assailed it on the left. Both were driven back under a tremendous fire of musketry and cannon. Humbert now concentrated his entire force. His confidence seemed to astound the enemy. The fearful *Pas de charge* was beaten! and a combined assault compelled the British army to retire within the town.

The French infantry followed, supported by some pieces of cannon which they had taken from the enemy and turned against him. A fearful conflict for a time ensued, till, under a heavy fire from the British artillery, the French cavalry made a desperate charge down the main street of Castlebar, which, being successively repeated and boldly supported by the bayonet and the pike, decided the fate of the day. The British army fled the town, abandoning their cannon and baggage to the victors. The cavalry of Lake, which was numerous,\* increased the confusion of his rout. Pressing on the infantry, in their hurried passage of the bridge which formed their line of retreat, they bore down whole masses of the fugitive troops.

The Frasers, a gallant Scotch regiment, exhibited through-

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\* These comprised some of the best troops of the British line—the 6th Carabineers, the 23rd Light Dragoons, Lord Jocelyn's Light Horse, designated "the Foxhunters," from the superior quality of their steeds, the Roxburghe Fencible Cavalry, with some of the best-appointed yeoman cavalry corps.

out the day the most admirable discipline and soldier-like conduct, sustaining with characteristic firmness the brunt of the action, and fighting to the last with invincible courage.

The battle of Castlebar, which was fought on the 27th of August, 1798, was one of the most extraordinary incidents of that eventful period. When we review the situation and comparative strength of the armies, the vast superiority of the one—the slender force, and the previous fatigues encountered, sufficient to have exhausted the animal spirit of the other; when we consider that the field of battle was selected by General Lake, while the necessity of the moment left no choice to Humbert, we reflect with astonishment on the issue of the contest.

The rout of General Lake from Castlebar was disorderly in the extreme; and the ill-fated country through which he passed, experienced the usual consequences attendant on a British retreat. Having reached the town of Tuam, in the county of Galway, the panic amongst his troops had not subsided; some of them, scarcely allowing time for the refreshment of their horses, pursued their flight to Athlone, not conceiving themselves secure until they had passed the boundary of the province and gained the eastern side of the Shannon, more than 50 miles distant from the enemy's outposts at Castlebar.

General Humbert, on taking possession of the town, despatched his aid-de-camp Teeling, with an escort and flag, bearing proposals to the commander of the British troops. Provided with the best horses which could be secured in Castlebar, they presently came up with the retreating army of Lake. Here an occurrence the most disgraceful to military discipline ensued. The flag was fired on, the escort was murdered, and the officer made prisoner. Refused access to General Lake, he was compelled to accompany the army for many miles in its disorderly retreat, and frequently threatened with death, for daring to be the bearer of any commission from the enemy to the commander of his Majesty's forces.

Teeling was accosted at intervals by different officers, and interrogated as to the object of his mission; but indignant at the unsoldierly insult offered to his flag, he repulsed their advances, and peremptorily refused to communicate with any other authority than the Commander-in-chief. At length



presented to General Lake, addressing that officer in English, he communicated to him his message, viz. :—"Humbert, General-in-chief, actuated by the desire of stopping the effusion of blood, offers honourable terms of capitulation to General Lake, and the British officers and soldiers under his command." Lake received the message with sullen displeasure, and expressed his resentment for the language in which it was conveyed. "Such is the language of my General," was the reply; "and if even less courteous, it would be my duty to convey it." General Lake hastily rejoined, "You, Sir, are an Irishman; I shall treat you as a rebel—why have you been selected by General Humbert on this occasion?" "To convey to you, Sir, his proposal in a language which, he presumes, you understand. As to your menace, you cannot be ignorant that you have left with us many British officers prisoners at Castlebar." Lake hastily retired. In a little time General Hutchinson came forward, and apologising for the conduct of the British troops, requested that it might not be unfavourably represented to General Humbert. He added that General Lake was much concerned at the occurrence, and begged it might be attributed to the true cause—the laxity of discipline in a moment of much excitement; that General Humbert's officer was now at liberty to retire, with an escort in attendance to convey him beyond the British lines.

General Lake could not have made a better choice than in the gallant officer who was the medium of this communication. Highly respected by his countrymen, he was alike distinguished by the urbanity of his manners and the manly qualities which should always characterise the soldier. "I can excuse, for the reasons assigned," replied Teeling, "the personal rudeness I have experienced, but I cannot suppress my abhorrence of the atrocious and cold-blooded massacre of my escort. I shall return to General Humbert, but not without my flag." This seemed to be a matter of embarrassment for a moment to General Hutchinson; for the banner which had been exhibited that evening as a flag of truce, had been won in the morning by the hand that bore it, and the victorious Humbert, in compliment to his officer, would not have it exchanged for a more pacific ensign. General Hutchinson intimated a doubt of Lake's compliance with this demand. The flag was, however, restored, but the accep-



tance of the escort declined, "I will have no escort," said Teeling; "General Hutchinson's honour is my protection." "Then General Hutchinson shall be your escort," was the reply, and he accompanied him along the British line.

General Humbert received his aid-de-camp with the warmest expressions of satisfaction at his return. He had not reflected on the hazardous duty which he had assigned him, until his long absence had given rise to alarm, and led him in some degree to apprehend the consequences which General Lake had contemplated. The fiery temper of Humbert's mind was not at all times easy of control, and on this occasion he gave vent to his feelings in no very qualified terms of indignation. He spoke of reprisals for the murder of his escort, and the insult offered to an officer of his staff. "No, General," replied his aid-de-camp; "it is by your magnanimity you must take revenge on your enemies." The generous rebuke struck at once on the feelings of the fiery Humbert. Embracing his officer, he exclaimed, "You have preserved my life more than once to-day! . . . Select of our prisoners whom you please, and send them to their runagate commander." This concession was cheerfully embraced, and several British officers, on the moment, were permitted to retire from Castlebar.

I should not, perhaps, have dwelt on the foregoing occurrence, associated with the name of so near a relative, had not his romantic courage and humanity been alike conspicuous throughout the whole campaign, and proverbial in every quarter of the province, where, to this hour, his memory is cherished and his fate lamented.

The victory of Castlebar placed in the hands of Humbert a large supply of military stores, arms, standards and cannon, with a vast number of prisoners, many of whom joined his ranks. So rapid was his success, that in the course of six days after his landing he was in the possession of the towns of Killalla, Ballina, Castlebar, Newport, Westport, Foxford, and Ballinrobe. In fact the county of Mayo had received a new form of government; while a civil and military organization was in progress for the entire province of Connaught. These objects, however, so much engrossed the attention of the Commander-in-chief, that more important advantages were not on the moment embraced, which the discomfiture of the enemy had placed within his reach. He continued

his head-quarters at Castlebar, while the Marquis Cornwallis was advancing against him with an army from the capital, which was hourly augmented by the combination of detached forces occupying stations to the westward of his line of march.

The impolicy of delay at Castlebar was strongly urged, and the advantage of pressing immediately northward pointed out by Teeling in the most forcible terms; but the French General could not be impressed with the importance of the measure. He had every confidence in the adviser—he fully appreciated his talents, his zeal, and his services; but Humbert was a man not easily diverted from the line which he had once laid down for action, and on this point he only became sensible of his error when it was too late to retrieve it.

Lord Cornwallis had now concentrated a powerful force at Athlone, while General Lake at the same time was posted at Tuam and General Taylor at Boyle. Encompassed on the land side by three armies, nearly equidistant from each other and covering the adjoining counties to the north, the south, and the east of Mayo, the situation of Humbert became hazardous in the extreme. He at length perceived the necessity of changing his intended line of operations; and ordering the troops which he had left at Killalla, and a small detachment stationed at Ballina to meet him on his route, he marched from Castlebar on the 4th of September, with the entire French garrison and a considerable force of auxiliaries.

The attention of Humbert was now directed to the north, and in a rapid march for Sligo he reached Colooney with the van of his army on the morning of the 5th. Here its advance was impeded by a small but gallant force, under the command of Colonel Veriker of the Limerick regiment, who, after a bold resistance,\* was compelled to retreat with the loss of his cannon. This action was bravely contested, and, as Humbert declared, creditable to the arms of his opponents. Mistaking the enemy which he had repulsed for the advance-guard of a more formidable army, and expecting its attack, the French General remained for some

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\* Humbert bore honourable testimony to the gallantry of Colonel Veriker, whom he pronounced the only British officer he had encountered in Ireland who was capable of commanding a hundred men.



time on the field forming his troops, as they came up, for action; then, without making any attempt on Sligo, he entered Leitrim, and by a rapid march reached Manor Hamilton on the 6th, more than fifty miles distant from his late headquarters at Castlebar.

Closely pressed by the cavalry of Lake, whose army, with that of General Taylor, was marching on his rear, while Lord Cornwallis, with whom General Moore from a more westerly point was prepared to co-operate, was advancing on the right, Humbert found it impracticable to proceed, and quickly changing his line of march, he pressed with indefatigable rapidity towards Granard. This was a position which, under present circumstances, he conceived it an object of the first importance to obtain; it would have given him an imposing station between the royal army and the capital, and afforded a better field for the exercise of his military genius, and for a prolongation of the war. An insurrectionary movement had taken place in some of the adjoining districts; and subsequent to the march of the French army from Castlebar, a diversion had been made in their favour, in an attack on the town of Granard on the morning of the 5th by a popular force, hastily assembled and but ill-prepared for action.

Foiled in his attempt to gain a position in the north, Humbert led his army to the banks of the Shannon; and while the Marquis Cornwallis, in a forced march, arrived with his column at Carrick to secure the passage of that river, the combined French and Irish forces crossed it, uninterrupted at Ballintra. On the morning of that day, the 7th, the rear-guard of Humbert's army had repulsed the van of General Lake's, and gained so much in advance of the latter, that it delayed for a time in an unsuccessful effort to turn the enemy's march, by destroying the bridge which formed the only direct line of approach. Everything depending on rapidity of movement, Humbert, to aid the celerity of his march, abandoned his heavy cannon, having rendered them for the present unserviceable to the enemy.

Four days had passed since the French and auxiliaries marched out from Castlebar, and during that period they had not enjoyed one hour's respite from toil. Harassed by the enemy, their line of march exhibited at intervals a perfect scene of running fight, from the close contact and intermixture of the advancing and pursuing armies. On the night of



the 7th Humbert halted at Cloon, refreshed his troops, and indulged them with two hours' repose.

Baffled by the celerity of Humbert's movement, Lord Cornwallis marched at ten o'clock on the night of the 7th from Carrick-on-Shannon for the town of Mohill, situate three miles south-west of the position which the French army occupied at Cloon,\* while General Lake continued to follow in the enemy's route. On his arrival at Mohill, at a little after day-break on the morning of the 8th, learning that the troops of Humbert were already in motion, the Viceroy pressed with all possible expedition for St. Johnstown, in the county of Longford, in order to intercept the march of the French General to Granard, on which he was advancing with his usual rapidity and boldness.

General Lake not having reached Cloon until some time after it was evacuated by the enemy, the short period of a few hours would have placed Humbert in possession of Granard or led him into contact with the army of Cornwallis. Lake, therefore, availing himself of the advantage which his strength in cavalry afforded him,† mounted light infantry troops behind his dragoons to harass the enemy's rear, and impede, as much as possible, their advance without bringing them to general action.‡ Humbert pushed vigorously forward, the rear-guard of his army skirmishing with the troops of Lake; but still closer pressed by the enemy, he now halted his front, and took up his position for action on the field of Ballinamuck.

Humbert had scarcely formed his line of battle when he had the mortification to perceive General Sarazen, the second in command (an officer who from the first hour of landing to that moment had distinguished himself by the most daring intrepidity), gallop down the line of the rear division,

\* See his Excellency's despatches to the Duke of Portland, 9th September, 1798.

† He mustered, in cavalry, the Carabineers, detachments of Hompesch's, and the 1st Fencible Cavalry, 23rd Light Dragoons, 1st Fencible Light Dragoons, and the Roxburgh Light Dragoons.—*See his Official Returns, Sept. 8, 1798.*

‡ The importance which Lord Cornwallis attached to the suppression of this small force was apparent from the cautious line, but extended scale of his military operations, and his instructions to his general officers not to hazard a battle without an almost moral certainty of success.—*Official Communications.*

exhibiting his cap on the point of his sabre as a signal of surrender, on which the division grounded their arms! An indignant exclamation burst from Humbert. "Treason!" he exclaimed; "but I will show them that I am Commander-in-chief! *En avant soldats!*" The division resumed their arms, and a general discharge of musketry and cannon instantly followed, by which a British general officer was wounded, who, with others, had ridden forward to receive, as they had prematurely imagined, the unconditional surrender of the French army.

The action now became general. All that military science combined with manly energy could display, was exhibited in the conduct of Humbert, who, environed by armies nearly 30,000 strong, maintained with chivalrous courage the honour of the republican arms. To the Irish troops the contest was a "forlorn hope," and sensible that not a man of their number would be received to composition, they courted death on the field of fight. General Lake perceiving, from their concentrated movement, the intention of attacking his cannon, ordered his artillerists to secure their guns, with which they galloped from their posts and gained a more favourable position on an eminence at some distance: exposed to their deadly fire, platoons of pikemen were swept off the plain as they continued to advance in succession.

Humbert supported to the last the high reputation of a soldier. Not desiring to survive the disaster of the day, he determined never to make personal surrender. Turning to his aid-de-camp, who fought hand to hand by his side, "*Allons, mon brave camarade,*" he exclaimed; "*nous mourrons ensemble!*" and it was not until this intrepid soldier was actually borne from his saddle by the British dragoons who surrounded him, that his brave companion-in-arms surrendered his sword. The French troops were admitted prisoners of war—the Irish received no quarter.\*

If the profuse effusion of blood could obliterate the stain of former defeat—if the slaughter of prisoners could add to the

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\* The following is General Humbert's letter to the French Directory: "CITIZEN DIRECTORS,—After having obtained the greatest successes, and made the arms of the French republic to triumph during my stay in Ireland, I have at length been obliged to submit to a superior force of 30,000 troops, commanded by Lord Cornwallis. I am a prisoner of war on my parole. (Signed) HUMBERT."



glory of conquest, Lake enjoyed, this day, a signal triumph. Lord Cornwallis returned to the capital, leaving an army under the command of General Trench to re-conquer the several towns which had been previously abandoned, all of which, after an unsuccessful effort to retain them, fell in succession.

The most formidable resistance was made at Killalla, where General Humbert had left a few French officers for the purpose of organizing the peasantry and protecting his military stores. Against this town General Trench marched on the 23d, having been previously joined at Ballina by Lord Portarlington, with the troops which formed the garrison of Sligo under his command, who, though frequently attacked on his march, had succeeded in effecting this junction; thus constituting a considerable force in infantry and cavalry, supported by five pieces of cannon. While yet two miles from the town their advanced guard was fired on by a body of musketry, who had promptly marched out on the intelligence of their approach, and posting themselves advantageously under the covert of stone walls on each side of the road, proved a severe annoyance to the advance of the army. Little injury, however, was effected. The pikemen, who formed the principal defence of Killalla, having broken up their encampment in the vicinity, threw themselves into the town, and the French officers, though perfectly sensible that no successful resistance could be opposed to so formidable an enemy, held it a point of honour not to desert their allies, or surrender the first capture they had made without a struggle. This indeed was a feeling which influenced the entire of the popular force; for though acquainted with the surrender of the French army on the 8th, and the disasters which followed to their own countrymen, and having full time to retreat to the mountains and secure themselves against pursuit, they had awaited the approach of the enemy, and now rushed to inevitable destruction with apparently a total indifference to life.\*

After a brief but desperate struggle, in which one-half of its defenders perished, the town was taken possession of by

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\* "Running upon death with as little appearance of reflection or concern as if they were hastening to a show."—*Narrative of what passed at Killalla, etc.*



the royal troops. A fearful slaughter ensued.\* Then came courts-martial and executions, which continued for a week. Amongst the more conspicuous leaders who perished on this occasion were Bellew and Bourke. O'Dowd and Blake had paid the forfeit of their lives at Ballinamuck. The execution of these gentlemen was only a renewal of those painful scenes, to which, in the course of this work, I have had occasion so frequently to advert.† The confiscation of property followed, while in the fate of the sufferers was displayed the same manly fortitude which characterised those who preceded them. General Trench, to consummate the miseries of war, sent out detachments of his troops, who scoured the country, and, penetrating into the wildest districts of the province, burned the cabins of the peasantry, leaving the unfortunate women and children destitute of shelter during the ensuing winter in the most bleak and dreary portion of the island.

After the surrender of the French army, a cartel was concluded for the exchange of prisoners, under which General Humbert, with the residue of his forces, was to proceed to France. The most bitter regret was evinced by the French general on finding that Teeling was not to derive the benefit of this arrangement. The latter, as already observed, had surrendered prisoner of war when his general was captured. His person was easily identified; recent circumstances had made him known to General Lake, but (and I mention this circumstance with a feeling of gratitude and admiration), though between him and several of the British officers on the field an early and a familiar intercourse had subsisted, they had the generosity, under his present circumstances, not to make any recognition. On taking muster of the

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\* “ . . . The day after the battle, while the hand of slaughter was still in pursuit of unresisting peasants through the town.”—*Narrative of what passed at Killalla, etc.*

† “The week that followed the battle was employed in courts-martial in the morning, and at the most crowded dinners at the Castle in the evening.”—*Ibid.*

“Their proceedings at first appeared slow considering the multitudes they had to try—not less than 75 prisoners at Killalla and 110 at Ballina, besides those who might be brought in daily.”—*Ibid.*

A British officer writes thus, after the battle of Ballinamuck—“We brought 113 prisoners to Carrack-on-Shannon, 19 of whom we executed in one day, and left the remainder with another regiment to follow our example.”

French officers, he was set apart and claimed as a British subject by General Lake. Humbert remonstrated; he demanded his officer in the name of the French Government; he protested against what he conceived a breach of national honour and of the law of arms. "I will not part him," he exclaimed with violent emotion. "An hour ago, and ere this had occurred, he should have perished in the midst of us, with a rampart of French bayonets around him! I will accompany him to prison or to death." And this generous soldier did accompany his aid-de-camp to Longford prison, where he remained until the following day, when the French prisoners were conveyed to the capital, and thence embarked with the least possible delay on board transports for England. Teeling was removed to Dublin to be tried by court-martial. Mathew Tone, who had been arrested the day after the battle, was also recognised as an Irishman, and detained for trial.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### *Trial and Execution of Bartholomew Teeling.*

ON the 20th of September, Teeling was brought to trial, at the Royal Barracks in Dublin, before a court-martial composed of the following officers:—Colonel Magennis, president—Colonel Lord Gosford, Colonel Jones, Colonel Daly, Colonel Lord Enniskillen, Colonel Farly, Major Ponsonby. Long as Ireland had been familiarized to these scenes of blood, in the almost hourly execution of the bravest and most virtuous of her population, the present proceeding gave rise to a feeling of sympathy even in the breasts of many who had not hitherto evinced any compassion for the miseries of the people. When they reflected on the magnanimous conduct of the individual who stood before the court, his exertions in repressing every ebullition of popular violence, and his generous protection of the weak—to him a prouder triumph than the conquest of the sword; they felt for the approaching fate of a man whose virtues commanded their admiration and respect—a man who, although the determined foe to the oppressors of his country, could compassionate the weaknesses of those who, from early prejudice



and the baneful influence of the self-interested, had not the discernment to perceive the intrigues of power, or appreciate the value of national independence.

The deportment of the prisoner before the tribunal was manly, firm, yet temperate, and becoming the awful situation in which he stood. He expressed the difficulty he laboured under in proceeding to trial in the absence of General Humbert and of other witnesses, whose presence he considered essential to his defence, and requested time from the court to procure their attendance.

After a lengthened consultation on the subject of this application, the Judge-Advocate declared that no decision had been formed, but that after the evidence for the prosecution had been gone through, it would then be the proper season to determine whether the application of the prisoner was such as could be complied with. The court accordingly proceeded to hear evidence.

MR. WILLIAM COULSON, an inhabitant of his native town (Lisburn), was produced to identify the person of the prisoner; to prove that he was a natural-born subject of the king, and had assumed a different name;\* but the proposed information was rendered unnecessary by the candid declaration of Teeling, who at once avowing his native country and his name, protested against any desire of concealment, or of resorting to any measure incompatible with the open and manly line of defence which he conceived it his duty to adopt.

MICHAEL BURKE was then sworn.—This witness deposed that he had proceeded from his residence at Loughrea, and in the character of a United Irishman joined the French at Castlebar, with the intention of procuring information for the government. The substance of his evidence chiefly served to show that “he had seen Mr. Teeling execute the duties of a French officer under General Humbert, and carry into execution the orders which that general had issued, etc., etc.; that witness had accompanied the French army from Castlebar to Colooney, where he deserted them previous to their engagement with the King’s forces.” He concluded his

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\* It was customary in the French armies to assume a “*nom de guerre*,” in conformity with which, Teeling, on entering the service, adopted the name of Biron.



direct examination by a voluntary declaration—"that the conduct of the prisoner throughout their march was most exemplary."

The JUDGE-ADVOCATE having read the minutes of evidence, asked the prisoner whether he wished to interrogate the witness. "I merely wish him to explain," replied Teeling, "what he means by the term 'exemplary conduct.'"

To this the witness, in explanation, said, "that enormities had been committed by the rebels against a certain description of people,\* which, when complained of, they endeavoured to excuse, by saying that they only injured Protestants, on which Mr. Teeling warmly exclaimed that he knew of no difference between a Protestant and a Catholic, nor should any be allowed, and that, as far as he could, he would not suffer persons of any sect to be injured;" and the witness further added, "that the prisoner constantly and zealously interfered in suppressing the excesses to which the rebels were inclined."

The prisoner here briefly addressed the court, and again urged the necessity which existed for the attendance of General Humbert and witnesses from the county Mayo, in order to support his defence.

The JUDGE-ADVOCATE answered, "that General Humbert was not within the jurisdiction of the court, but that the

\* As the informer Burke, in his evidence, has not defined the nature or the cause of those 'enormities,' I present the reader with the following extracts from the same respectable authority which I have so often quoted in the preceding chapter.

"The name of Orangeman had but just begun to be heard in Connaught; and much it were to be wished that no such society had ever appeared among us, to furnish to the Romanists too plausible a pretext for alarm and hostility against their Protestant brethren. The Bishop had opposed their establishment with all his might. On the very day when the invasion happened, he was busied in entering a protest, in his primary visitation charge, against the first sentence of the oath by which Orangemen are united together—'*I am not a Roman Catholic.*' . . . The society had originated in the same northern county which some years before had disgraced itself by an infamy new to Protestants, an actual expulsion of Roman Catholics from their homes. . . .

"It is a circumstance worthy of particular notice, that during the whole time of this civil commotion, not a drop of blood was shed by the Connaught rebels, except in the field of war."—*See Narrative of what passed at Killalla, etc., pp. 24 and 85.*

letter\* written by him to the president of the court, and which, in the opinion of the court, contained everything in favour of the prisoner that could result from a personal examination, without the risk of being weakened by a cross-examination, would be admitted as evidence in his favour, and transmitted with the minutes of his trial to his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant. With respect to the other persons, to admit the necessity of their attendance would be to produce a delay, operating against the purposes of speedy justice, for which courts-martial were especially constituted; neither did there appear anything to justify a conclusion that the evidence of those persons would be other than palliative; and in this respect, however respectable they might be, their testimony must fall infinitely short of that which the witness for the prosecution had already voluntarily given in favour of the prisoner, which proved that the conduct of Mr. Teeling was such as even to challenge the approbation of the person whose examination of that conduct had been made with a hostile intention."

The prisoner repeated his desire to give the court no unnecessary trouble, and urged his point no farther. The court

\* The following is a copy of the letter referred to :—

*"Humbert, General-in-chief, commanding the French Army, to the President of the Court-martial.*

"SIR,—I wrote some days ago to Lord Cornwallis, relative to the generous conduct that has been observed by my aid-de-camp, Teeling, since he came into your country.

"I dare to hope, Sir, that he will pay attention to my letter, and that he will not leave you ignorant of the particulars of it.

"I proceed myself to put you in possession of them, well persuaded that you will regard them.

"Teeling, by his bravery and generous conduct, has prevented, in all the towns through which we have passed, the insurgents from proceeding to most criminal excesses. Write to Killalla, to Ballina, to Castlebar—there does not live an inhabitant who will not render him the greatest justice. This officer is commissioned by my government; and all these considerations, joined to his gallant conduct towards your people, ought to impress much in his favour. I flatter myself that the proceedings in your court will be favourable to him, and that you will treat him with the greatest indulgence.—I am, with respect,

"HUMBERT.

"On board the *Van Tromp*, 2nd Complimentary day of the 6th year (18th September, 1798)."



then adjourned, having appointed Saturday the 22nd for the prisoner to enter on his defence.

An extraordinary sensation was now excited in his favour; for it was impossible to resist the impression produced by the recital of his humane and generous conduct, combined with his dignified deportment and interesting appearance.\* Mild in his manners, of quick and lively perception, not yet twenty-four years of age, nature seemed to have combined the firmness of the sage with all the enthusiasm and glowing ardour of youth. The soldiers, as he passed their several guards, evinced unusual marks of respect. He had to pass through the Royal Barracks from the place of his imprisonment to the sitting of the court. In the uniform of an officer of the *etat major*, he marched with a light step and military gait, so cheerful and superior to his fortune, that it seemed as if he was the only person uninterested in the fate that awaited him. He was uniformly saluted by the guard which escorted him to and from the court-martial; and this mark of respect, the spontaneous courtesy of the generous soldier, was not prohibited by the officer of the day.

The court having met, pursuant to adjournment, Teeling was called to enter on his defence. He stepped forward with the same serene and unruffled countenance, the same dignity of deportment and self-possession which he had evinced throughout the trial.

"I know," said he, "Mr. President, that I have to address a court of soldiers and men of honour. My case is short, and my defence shall be simple and concise. I shall confine it to the suggestion, and to the suggestion only, of such points as furnish, in my mind, ample matter for the consideration of this court.

"I am accused of high treason. Permit me to suggest the peculiar advantages which, under this charge, I should derive, were I tried before the ordinary tribunals of the land. These tribunals are now open—I am amenable to them;

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\* In France, too, especially amongst his brother officers, his doubtful fate was the subject of the most anxious solicitude. The following paragraph, which appeared in the Paris journals, though unfortunately unfounded, excited general delight throughout the military circles:—

"Le Général Bartholomew Teeling, fait prisonnier avec Humbert, s'est hereusement échappé, après avoir terrassé d'un coup de poign le dragon Anglais chargé de sa garde."



and I ask whether it is consistent with your constitution, where the life of an individual is at stake, to forego the ordinary forms of justice, and to decide upon my fate in this extraordinary and summary manner. To me, this question cannot be unimportant : to the members of this court, I presume to think, that, as a point of constitutional liberty, it is infinitely more important than as merely regarding the fate of a single individual.

“Sir, I am accused of high treason, inasmuch as being a subject of these realms, I was found in alliance with the enemies of the king. I admit, as I have already done, that I was born an Irishman. But circumstances forced me from the land of my birth. I became a subject of France. I embraced the profession of a soldier, and entered the service of that country which afforded me its protection. It is scarcely necessary to observe to this honourable court that, as a soldier and a man of honour, it was my duty to obey the orders of my superiors without privilege of inquiry ; and that disobedience of them must have been followed by infamy and death. In obedience to such an order (which you will observe contained no intimation whatever of the object of the expedition), I repaired to La Rochelle, embarked with my general as his aid-de-camp, and was landed in Ireland. You will decide, Sir, whether I can fairly be considered as an Irish subject, deliberately rebelling against the state of which he was a member, or joining an invader as a traitor against that state. That I acted as a French officer I admit ; nor do I fear that it can prejudice my case in a court of soldiers to say, that *I did my duty to the utmost of my power*. I did what I conceived my duty. I did not desert my post. I did not endeavour as a conscious traitor to save myself by flight. I did not endeavour to waste unnecessary blood by fruitless resistance. I surrendered upon the confidence of being treated as a prisoner of war. To that privilege of the conquered, the general under whom I served, and to whom I immediately belong, has put in a claim on his own and in my behalf ; and to that privilege permit me to repeat my pretensions.

“One word more, Sir, and I have done. The witness who supported the prosecution has borne evidence to what he terms my humanity, in a manner which seemed to have produced an influence on the court. Perhaps it scarcely

becomes me to claim any merit upon such a ground. Certainly I did not pursue it under the influence of any selfish impression allied with future consequences. I was merciful for mercy's sake, and from the conviction that it should ever influence the conduct and the decisions of power. As a Roman Catholic, too, I had learned that it was my duty, as it was surely my inclination, to love and to protect my fellow-creatures.

"Sir, I shall trouble this court no further. I feel grateful for the candour and indulgence which I have experienced. I know the high character of the great personage in whose breast my fate may perhaps find its final decision. To you, Sir, and to him, if it shall so happen, I do submit that fate; and, let the issue be life or death, I shall await it with the confidence which becomes a man who has no doubt that his case will quit this court accompanied by every advantage which it can derive from a just and generous consideration."

The order which the prisoner received to proceed to La Rochelle was laid before the court.

The trial closed. The court, after some deliberation, pronounced sentence of death, and the sentence was finally approved by his Excellency the Marquis Cornwallis.

Teeling had over-valued the high character of the viceroy: he was deaf to every application for mercy, though solicited by some of the most zealous supporters of the government, who voluntarily came forward and had the manliness to declare, that the execution of the sentence would be an eternal blot on his administration. A near relative addressed a memorial to his Excellency, praying respite of the sentence for twenty-four hours, to the end that the law officers of the crown might be consulted as to the competency of a military court to decide on cases of high treason when the civil tribunals were open, and in a case where the accused held no commission from the crown.\* An interview with his Excellency was found impracticable, but the memorial was delivered to an officer of his establishment whose high and confidential situation rendered him a desirable channel of

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\* This was decided a few weeks after, in favour of the prisoner, in the case of Theobald Wolfe Tone. On the application of his counsel to the Court of King's Bench, the Chief-Justice issued an immediate order for the suspension of his sentence.



communication. This officer was a man of humanity, and evinced much sensibility on the occasion. "Your friend," said he, "*ought* to be saved." He pronounced this with a most emphatic tone of voice, and retired to present the memorial to his Excellency. He returned, and after expressing in general terms his feelings of sympathy and disappointment, concluded with this mysterious observation—"Mr. Teeling is a man of high and romantic honour?" "Unquestionably," was the reply. "Then I deplore to tell you that his fate is inevitable—his execution is decided on."

I shall not trust to my own feelings on this subject. I shall close the melancholy narration with the following quotation from a periodical\* of the day, though timid and servile as was the Irish press of that period:—

"MR. TEELING.

"On the 24th inst. (September), at two o'clock, this unfortunate and interesting young man suffered death on Arbour Hill, and conducted himself on the awful occasion with a fortitude impossible to be surpassed, and scarcely to be equalled. Neither the intimation of his fate, nor the near approach of it, produced on him any diminution of courage. With firm step and unchanged countenance he walked from the *Prevot* to the place of execution, and conversed with an unaffected ease while the dreadful apparatus was preparing. With the same strength of mind and body, he ascended the eminence. He then requested permission to read a paper which he held in his hand. He was asked by the officer, whose immediate duty it was, whether it contained anything of strong nature? He replied that it did; on which permission to read it was refused, and Mr. Teeling silently acquiesced in the restraint put on his last moments. . . .

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\* *Walker's Hibernian Magazine.*

The entire of this chapter, with the exception of the last-mentioned circumstance, is, indeed, but a transcript from the public journals. For the details of the trial I had no other source of information. I could have wished also to have given the particulars of the case of Mathew Tone, who shared the same melancholy fate a few days afterwards. But the latter gentleman was not treated with the same delicacy which it is but justice to admit my brother experienced, even from avowed enemies.



"This melancholy consequence from the trial of the unfortunate Teeling, was not expected by the public. The humanity which he so effectually exerted in restraining the excesses of a vindictive warfare, it was thought would have produced a mitigation expressive of humanity in his favour. The members of the court which tried him, seemed strongly influenced by the evidence appearing to that humanity. But theirs was the office of justice alone—to extend mercy was not in their power. It is not for us in the present day to hazard a conjecture whether strict justice be always, and under all circumstances, true policy; but we will suppose, for so far we may suppose safely, that the severity of Teeling's fate was rendered necessary by the peculiar state of the times."

"Humanity will drop a tear for the unfortunate fate of a man endowed with such manly qualities and virtues."

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### *Sufferings of the State Prisoners—Luke Teeling.*

My father was a prisoner when the fate of his eldest son was announced to him. The *Postlethwait Tender*, on board of which he was confined, contained within the limits of one small apartment, thirty-four gentlemen, of respectable rank in life and independent circumstances. In this miserable prison-house, its inmates could never stand erect, and crowded together in a circumscribed space not fourteen feet square, they could only enjoy a partial and unrefreshing slumber in succession. Here, entombed on the ocean, during the sultry heat of a summer the most oppressive that has been remembered for thirty years, they inhaled the pestiferous atmosphere of a tender; and in the depth of winter, when their numbers were reduced to a few, they were exposed with open port-holes to all the inclemency of the chilling blast. Nor were they permitted to receive a supply of wholesome food from their friends; nothing was allowed them beyond what the parsimonious bounty of Government afforded. At four o'clock in the evening, the hatches were

locked down, and the prisoners remained immured in darkness until nine on the following morning. Sometimes, forgetful of his situation, the prisoner would raise his form to stand erect as God and nature had designed, when the hard repelling beam, in contact with his head, reminded him that the hand of man had prescribed his limits. My father, whose fine-formed head and silver locks are still present to my imagination, presented, on his removal from this detestable prison, a perfect encrustment of festered wound from the forehead to the occiput.

The commander of the *Postlethwaite*, Captain Steele, was man of kindness and humanity, and I have heard my father speak in the most favourable terms of his mild and gentlemanlike disposition. He omitted no opportunity consistent with his duty and the prying vigilance with which his every movement was watched, to mitigate the rigours of imprisonment, and assuage the sufferings to which, if he had not the power of affording relief, he at least extended his sympathy. The following incident displays the benevolence of his character, and forms a strong contrast to that of others in higher authority.

This humane officer, whom nature had never designed for the heartless duties which his situation imposed, rented a neat cottage which he had procured for the accommodation of his wife and children, a few miles inland from the bay where his vessel rode at anchor. A young man, in gentlemanly attire, but much apparent distress, introduced himself to the family of Captain Steele, and personating the son of Mr. Teeling, implored an asylum and relief. Both were generously extended, and for more than a month he experienced every attention which that benevolent family could bestow. The better to carry on his system of deceit, the impostor was dressed in deep mourning. But the iniquity of the proceeding did not stop here. He levied contributions on the patriotism of the virtuous and unsuspecting inhabitants of the district, under pretence of relief for a family whose share in the calamities of Ireland had excited a lively feeling of sympathy in the public mind.

The kind-hearted captain rejoiced that his cottage afforded an asylum to the son of his prisoner; but he was too delicate in sentiment to wound the feelings of a man, under many domestic afflictions, by the most distant allusion to the cir-

cumstance. The impostor, in the meantime, emboldened by his success, enlarged his appeals for pecuniary relief; this, together with his apparently unguarded conduct, eventually led to suspicion. Some of the more intelligent country people communed together. The cheat was discovered, and the spy arrested by the honest fellows whose confidence he had so much abused. On his person was found a list, headed, "Names of Contributors in aid of the Persecuted Family of Mr. Teeling." This was immediately destroyed, but a more important document remained, which he had the ingenuity to conceal. The unfortunate wretch trembled for his safety: perhaps he had the cause for alarm, but the better feeling of humanity prevailed. He was conducted to the town of Carrickfergus and delivered over, under a charge of swindling and fraud, to the governor of the Castle, who was generally known to be the personal friend of my father. Freed from the hands of the populace, he resumed his confidence. With the most perfect composure and official importance, he produced Government credentials, too well authenticated to be questioned, and demanded a military escort to convey him to head-quarters. There was no trifling with a personage of his consequence; the Government spy in those days was a character of no little importance in the state; and the commandant of the fortress was obliged, however reluctantly, to provide him with a guard. A public advertisement from my father cautioned the country against his further wiles; and as the ministerial agent never again appeared on the public stage, it is presumed he was provided for in a manner suitable to his merits.

My father's situation during his imprisonment, will be best described by quotations from his own and other letters, written at the period, a number of which now lie before me. They are, for the most part, addressed to a dear friend with whom he was in the habit of communicating during the lengthened period of his imprisonment, when circumstances favoured the correspondence, and have been to me a source of painful entertainment. They may afford subject for reflection and improvement to the youthful mind, and will imprint on the hearts of my children an affectionate remembrance of his worth.



## "POSTLETHWAIT TENDER,

3<sup>rd</sup> Sept., 1798.

"I found it impossible to acquaint you earlier with the change\* in my imprisonment; it is only now we have been permitted the use of pen and ink, and so closely are we jammed together that it is with difficulty I can scribble a line on my knee. There are thirty-four of us confined, by day and night, in space not larger than your small parlour, and not more than five feet head-room between decks. We are not permitted to receive or send out sealed letters. Newspapers are prohibited." . . . .

## "PROVOST PRISON, BELFAST,

" 9<sup>th</sup> Dec., 1798.

"Having an opportunity, through the kindness of my friend, Mr. Fulton, I send you a blank bond and oath.† I have marked some of the objectionable parts, your own prudence will point out the remainder. The parts I have marked are contrary to honour and religion, and, therefore, ought not to be required. It is unreasonable to expect, and dishonourable, in any person who is not of the established religion, to swear that "he will, to the best of his power,

\* This change took place immediately after a proposal had been made to my father to subscribe to the conditions of the "Banishment Bill," to which the following was his reply:—

"Mr. Teeling having never offended against the laws of his country, nor given any cause for the outrages committed on his family, his property, and his person, cannot accept of General Nugent's proposal of transportation, nor any terms that imply guilt.

"ARTILLERY BARRACK, August 25, 1798.

"To General Nugent,

"Commander-in-chief of the Northern District."

† The following is a copy of the oath referred to:—

"I, ———, do, in the presence of Almighty God, solemnly swear, that I will be faithful, and bear true allegiance to his Majesty, King George the Third; and that I will, to *the best of my power, maintain and support* the laws and constitution of this kingdom, and the succession to the throne in his Majesty's illustrious house. And I do further swear, that I *abjure, detest*, and for ever renounce all society with United Irishmen, or any other society or association for the purpose of overturning or *resisting* the Government of this country."

support the laws," when one law (without going farther) degrades and taxes his mode of worship, and is contrary to the free will which God has given to man. Non-resistance is, therefore, all that can be expected in this case. To swear hatred against any man is to violate one of the first principles of the Christian religion.

"My reply was brief. 'Mr Teeling will not subscribe to bond or oath, or to any terms which honour and conscience forbid. Justice entitles him to a trial, and he demands it.'" . . . . .

"PRISON-SHIP,

"26th Dec., 1798.

\* "We got on board yesterday, a little before three o'clock, in all twenty-four prisoners, which, added to thirty-six previously on board, make our present number sixty. Out of these, I am informed, eleven go up this day to be sent, with others from the Provost, to Dublin, and thence for foreign service, or what is commonly termed *condemned regiments*. Under every circumstance I have cause of gratitude to God, and I assure you, my beloved, I have no uneasiness save on your account and that of my dear girls; but you will, on reflection, be resigned to the will of Divine Providence, and rise superior to the wickedness of our enemies, and cherish my darling daughters, who stand so much in need of your consolation and example.

"As it is impossible to come here and return with daylight, and as the cold in an open boat is extreme, I must request that you will not think of coming. It cannot improve my situation, but may render it worse by injuring your health, and thus deprive our children of the only protection left to them.

"Poor John Dickey is on the list for foreign service, but he is manly and firm. . . . .

"POSTLETHWAIT PRISON-SHIP,

"29th Dec., 1798.

"The men in power have thought fit to send me here

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† The above is an extract of a letter to my revered Mother.

again, without assigning any cause. But God's will be done—He will regulate everything for the best, and we shall be able to see this when He is pleased to uncover our eyes. For the present my situation appears uncomfortable, separated from society and exposed to the cold of a prison-ship (without fire) whose windows are open port-holes.

"The cold of my situation renders it very difficult to write." . . . .

"PROVOST PRISON,

" 24th March, 1799.

"The —— per Mr. Hindman came safe, also your letter to Mrs. Teeling. She, poor soul, has been greatly distressed since Saturday, the 16th inst., when an order was given to seize our pens and ink, and to prohibit every visit from our friends. My daughters have not been here since, and Mrs. Teeling had great difficulty in getting admission for *ten minutes*, attended the whole time by an officer. By these and some other restrictions, my situation is not improved. I have to wish that this letter may pass unnoticed." . . . .

"PROVOST PRISON,

" 29th March, 1799.

"Many men in confinement have wished that the mind could be imprisoned as well as the body; but, thank God, I have not any tendency to this gloomy or cowardly disposition; and I am now convinced, by experience as well as theory, that imprisonment improves or debases the mind; and that every man has the power of choosing for himself. If he becomes slothful, and believes that his situation requires indulgence, he is undone; but if he practises the belief that the mind, like the body, is improved and strengthened by exercise, his virtues will be increased and society benefited.

"Yesterday, my much esteemed friend, Robert Simms, with three others, was put on board a frigate in this harbour, in order, as report says, to be sent to Fort George. His departure is regretted by all his intimates; but, perhaps, by none so much as myself.



"The strictness of our imprisonment continues, and the court-martial is sitting." . . . . .

"PROVOST PRISON,

"13th April, 1799.

"The Dublin papers of Tuesday, which I saw on Thursday, are cause of uncommon alarm even at this time, *and in Ireland*. What may not be feared from men who forced so many people into the armies of a foreign despot, and brought in a bill to indemnify the savage Sheriff of the county Tipperary? It convinces me that they will not stop at anything, and that I ought to be prepared for banishment, or ——. The Almighty, I trust, will grant me adequate fortitude." . . . . .

"*To the Right Rev. Dr. Moylan.*

"PROVOST PRISON, BELFAST,

"18th Sept., 1799.

"MY LORD,

"I have been informed of the humane and friendly interest you take in my melancholy situation, and of the obliging tender which you have made of your services. Permit me to present you with my cordial thanks, and to hand you herewith a letter for the Lord-Lieutenant, written agreeable to your directions. I expect much from your interest and endeavours, but let the event of your application be what it may, my gratitude shall be lasting and sincere.

"I have no objection to give security, but I have every objection to oaths, tendered on the occasion, in which there is an acknowledgment of guilt and eternal hatred sworn to United Irishmen.

"In conclusion, let me assure your Lordship that my great and only crime lies in being considered the head of the Catholics in this county, and active in their cause at the time of our Convention.\*

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\* The highly-gifted but ill-fated agent of the Convention gives the following animated account of the first demand of that body (in the year 1792) for unqualified Freedom.

"The Catholics were thus once more, after a dreary interval of 104

"I have the honour to remain, with great personal attachment and regard,

"Your Lordship's obliged and faithful servant,

"LUKE TEELING."

years of slavery, fully and fairly represented by members of their own persuasion. The last Catholic assembly which Ireland had seen was the Parliament summoned by James II. in 1688,—a body of men whose wisdom, spirit, and patriotism, reflect no discredit on their country or their sect. The great object of this Parliament was National Supremacy. By an Act of Navigation they wisely guarded the commerce, and by a Declaration of Rights, boldly asserted the independence of their native land; both scandalously betrayed to the monopoly and the pride of England, by their immediate successors the Protestant Parliament of William. The patriots of the present day formed their best claim to public regard, on maintaining principles first advanced by an assembly, to whose merits no historian has yet ventured to do justice, but whose memory, when passion and prejudice are no more, will be perpetuated in the hearts of their grateful countrymen.

"The proceedings of the General Committee fully justified the foresight, and far surpassed the hopes of those who had devised the measure. On the first moment of their meeting, when they looked round and reviewed their numbers and their strength, they at once discarded the unworthy habits of deference and submission which their unhappy situation had so long compelled them to assume. They felt and acted with the decision of men who deserved to be free, and with the dignity becoming the representatives of three millions of people. The spirit of liberty ran like the electric fire through every link of their chains, and, before they were an hour convened, the question of their emancipation was, in fact, decided. . . . .

"The General Committee resolved, that a petition be prepared to his Majesty, stating the grievances of the Catholics of Ireland, and praying relief; and the members of the Sub-Committee were ordered to bring in the same forthwith, which being done, and the petition read in the usual forms, it was again read, paragraph by paragraph, each passing unanimously until the last.

"A spirited and intelligent member (Luke Teeling, Esq., of Lisburn, county Antrim), who represented a great northern county, then rose and said, 'That he must object to this paragraph on the ground of its being limited in its demand. His instructions from his constituents were to require nothing short of total emancipation; and it was not consistent with the dignity of this meeting, and much less of the great body whom it represented, to sanction, by anything which could be construed into an acquiescence on their part, one fragment of that unjust and abominable system, the Penal Code. It lay with the paternal wisdom of the Sovereign to ascertain what he thought fit to be granted, but it was the duty of this meeting to put him fully and unequivocally in possession of the wants and wishes of his people.' He therefore moved, 'That, in place of the paragraph then read, one should be inserted,



*"From Colonel Littlehales, Secretary to the Lord  
Lieutenant etc., etc.*

"DUBLIN CASTLE,  
29th Sep., 1799.

"DEAR SIR,

"It was necessary to obtain a report upon the case of Luke Teeling previous to submitting your letter of the 23d instant to the consideration of my Lord-Lieutenant, and it is with much concern I am to signify that, upon the most mature consideration of the circumstances attached to the conduct of Mr. Teeling, it appears he has been too far implicated in treasonable practices to warrant his Excellency in giving directions, at present, for his liberation; but per-

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praying that the Catholics might be restored to the equal enjoyments of the blessings of the Constitution.'

"It is not easy to describe the effect which this speech had on the assembly. It was received with the most extravagant applause. A member, of great respectability, and who had ever been remarked for a cautious and prudent system in his public conduct (D. T. O'Brien, Esq.), rose to declare his entire and hearty concurrence in the spirit of the motion. The question would now have been carried by acclamation but for the interposition of a member to whose opinion, from his past services and the active part he had ever taken, the Committee were disposed to pay every respect (John Keogh). He said, 'that he entirely agreed with the spirit of the motion, and he was satisfied that they had but to ask and they should receive; but the meeting had already despatched a great deal of business, the hour was late, and the question was of the very last importance. Have you,' said the speaker, 'considered the magnitude of your demand, and the power of your enemies? Have you considered the disgrace and the consequences of a refusal, *and are you prepared to support your claim?*' The whole assembly rose as one man, and, raising their right hands, answered, 'WE ARE!' It was a sublime spectacle. 'Then,' continued he, 'I honour and rejoice in a spirit which must render your success infallible. But let it not be said that you took up a question of this infinite magnitude in a fit of enthusiasm. Let us agree to retire. We meet again to-morrow. We will consider this question in the meantime, and whatever be the determination of the morning, it will not be accused of want of temperance or consideration.' This argument prevailed, and the meeting adjourned. . . .

"In this spirit the assembly met on the next day. The business was opened by the same member (L. Teeling) who had introduced the amendment. He stated that it was the duty of the Catholics not to wrong themselves by asking less than complete emancipation. That it was also the idea of their friends in the province from which he came.



suaded of Lord Cornwallis's desire to pay every attention in his power to any application from you, I shall have no hesitation, when a proper opportunity offers, of laying before his Excellency a renewal of your request.—“I have the honour to be, with great regard, dear Sir, your most faithful, humble servant.

“E. B. LITTLEHALES.

“*To the Most Rev. Dr. Moylan.*”

“*To his Excellency the Marquis of Cornwallis.*

“PROVOST PRISON,

“8th Oct., 1799.

“MY LORD,

“I bow with submission to your pleasure, which Dr. Moylan of Cork has communicated to me ; but I should be wanting in justice to your Excellency's known equity, and to my own character, were I to continue silent under implications of ‘treasonable practices.’ My crimes consist in being of the Catholic religion, and considered first of the body in this country. This has rendered me obnoxious to a faction, and to this I attribute my loss of liberty and property.

“As your Excellency is now on the spot, I entreat of your justice to inform yourself particularly from the Committee of Magistrates for the year 1798, what the charges are against me, and what character I supported in life before

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and this coincidence of sentiment would establish that union, from which the Catholic cause had already derived such essential benefit, and which had been found so formidable to their enemies. Something had been insinuated about danger :—he saw none. Violence was not the interest nor the wish of the meeting. ‘But,’ continued he, ‘we have been asked what we will do in case of a refusal. I will not, when I look round me, suppose a refusal ; but if such an event should take place, our duty is obvious : we are to tell our constituents, and THEY, not WE, are to determine.’

“Similar sentiments were avowed by every member who followed, and, on the question being put, the amendment, praying for complete restitution of the rights of the Catholics, was carried by the unanimous acclamation of the whole assembly.” —*Account of the proceedings of the General Committee of the Catholics of Ireland, by THEOBALD WOLFE TONE.*

the mysterious policy was adopted of arming and inflaming the minority against the majority, who were distinguished for loyalty and peaceable behaviour.

"You are in possession of my case in a letter which I had the honour of addressing to your Excellency on the 28th of May. I shall therefore only add that I remain, with great respect, your Excellency's obedient servant,

"LUKE TEELING."

About this period my father was removed to Carrickfergus Castle. Continuing to reject every overture on the part of Government to induce him to subscribe to their favourite measure of emigration, he was more than once threatened with their vengeance, and harrassed with the most teasing and vexatious changes and counter-changes in the manner and place of his imprisonment. The following further quotations will not be considered irrelevant. They are descriptive of the times, and throw some light on the interesting history of that eventful period; and it is but just to record the benevolence and kindness of valued and tried friends.

"CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE,

"11th Dec., 1799.

"I have, this day, been removed from the most unpleasant situation I experienced since the commencement of my captivity. Our gaoler was as disagreeable as any man in authority could render himself to prisoners. We got one fire of coals on our admission, and no more during our residence in the gaol. We had no beds; we lay on the floor; and the candles which we bought were taken from us. At seven o'clock last night we were removed to the Castle, and our satisfaction could only be exceeded by general liberation. I thank God neither my health nor my spirits have been injured. This prison is clean and airy, my room is large, commanding a view to the entrance of the harbour. Captain MacNeven has evinced much politeness, and acted the kindest part; he has just been here to give orders for some necessaries, and coals amongst the rest, so that I expect to warm myself this evening.

"MacNeven is solely actuated by his own humanity; he is acting without orders."

“CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE,

“29th Jan., 1800.

“My situation here is more heathful, and communication with my family freer than at Belfast. The cold of this fortress is intense; from the mal-construction of the chimneys I am sometimes for weeks unable to burn fire, but as the weather improves so will my situation. I have not heard anything relative to myself lately, but my own opinion has been long formed, that unless I subscribe to the terms of emigration I shall be confined during the war, with, perhaps, a chance of liberation in the event of a union with England, *which may God avert.*” . . . .

“CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE,

“4th Jan., 1801.

“In June last, I memorialled the Lord-Lieutenant for liberation, or an increase of subsistence. My memorial was presented at the Castle by General Drummond, who, I am persuaded, would have reported in my favour, in case of reference, but my application not having been attended to, I suspect that Lord C—— opposed it. As the latter is out of the kingdom, I think it prudent to make another effort.” . . . .

“5th Feb., 1801.

“I have received your letter of the 31st ult., informing me of Lord Fingall’s application to the Lord-Lieutenant, and his Excellency’s answer. I immediately wrote to General Drummond, to beg a speedy report on my memorial, and as favourable as justice would permit. My letter was forwarded directly, by express, with a few lines from the commandant of this fortress, not unfavourable to me. I shall hope for the best; but, be the event what it may, I feel much indebted to my Lord Fingall’s conduct. It is grateful to my own feelings, and honourable to his Lordship as an individual. I have received a polite and friendly letter from him.” . . . .



"CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE,

"12th Feb., 1801.

"I have not yet received any account from the Lord-Lieutenant; but 'great bodies move slow,' and I shall not be uneasy at his silence unless he observes it a week longer. I have had another letter from Lord Fingall in answer to mine, which, strictly speaking, did not require one—but this is only a further proof of his Lordship's polite attention.

"Mrs. Teeling went to Belfast, on Monday, with my daughter, whose health has suffered much from her attendance on me. They consulted Drs. M'Donnell and Crawford, and I expect every good from such able and friendly men. Neither of them would accept a fee. They have both refused money on every occasion since our misfortunes, and expressed themselves in the warmest terms of attachment. Is not such friendship sufficient to comfort and make a prison agreeable? As we had little previous intercourse with Dr. M'Donnell, you are, perhaps, not acquainted with him; yet he was the first friend in Belfast who attended to me on coming here a prisoner. He was out of town when I was brought in, but he came home that night and wanted to see me in my lodging (the black-hole), and being refused admittance, he immediately wrote me an affectionate letter, begging me to command anything in his power. Mr. Hudson,\* too, came from his own house to offer me his purse, which he did dissolved in tears, and with all the softness of female friendship.

"As soon as I hear from the great man I shall inform you of it."

"CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE,

"19th April, 1801.

"Lord Fingall's kind behaviour merits my warmest gratitude, and I shall always have pleasure in acknowledging my obligations to him. I attribute our want of success with Lord Cornwallis to Lord C——†, and all my misfortunes

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\* The Rev. Edward Hudson, Rector of Portglenone.

† It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader that Lord Castlereagh is the person alluded to.

to him and his faction, whose endeavours are exerted to undervalue my losses and represent me as a man of large fortune. This is the very quintessence of cruelty—they cannot be satisfied with depriving me of my liberty and property, but they would rob me of my good name. I have it from unquestionable authority, that a good man, high in office, to whom I am only known by character, went of his *own* accord to Lord C——, and recommended his allowing me an adequate subsistence, and received for answer, that ‘I had a property of thirty thousand pounds, which could not be expended yet.’ But even if this unfounded account had been true, it proves him a bad man, as justice knows no distinction, and the law allows ample subsistence for all state prisoners, yet mine is little more than that of a common felon. But virtue can never be pardoned by the vindictive heart.

“I have no hopes of liberation during the present Administration. . . .

4th November, 1801.

“I take the earliest opportunity of informing you that, by orders from General Drummond, all the restrictions lately imposed on me are taken off, and I have again permission to bathe. It is not necessary to comment on the conduct of a man\* who could, without cause, impose *new* restrictions on a person already three years and a half imprisoned—against whom there is no charge, and who has never offended against the rules of his prison. The cold is most severe, I can scarcely guide my pen, but I am, thank God, in as good health as you ever saw me. I have not heard anything respecting my liberation, but I am of opinion it may take place when the definite articles of peace are signed, and the army disbanded.”

Early in the year 1802, my father was liberated, after an imprisonment of nearly four years. Within that period many of his valued friends had ceased to exist. In his family and fortune he had suffered losses irretrievable; the latter made slight impression on a mind of his firm and philosophic

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\* *Not* General Drummond.

cast ; the more tender feelings of a paternal nature, time and resignation to the will of heaven assuaged. Blessed in the society of his wife and daughters he henceforth sought little intercourse with the world ; but the union of his countrymen was an object from which the energies of his ardent mind could never be estranged. Warm in his friendship, generous in resentment, he lived long, he lived respected, and the confidence of his country was the reward of his virtues. Of a numerous family of sons, it was the will of Providence that I only should survive to pay the last mournful tribute of respect, and witness the unruffled serenity which a life of virtue sheds over the bed of death.

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## CHAPTER XV.

*French Expedition from Brest under General Hardy—Dispersion of the Flotilla at Lough Swilly—Defeat and Capture of the Hoche, Loire, etc.—Death of Theobald Wolfe Tone—Conclusion.*

THE intelligence of General Humbert's defeat had not reached France, when the Directory, apprised of his early successes in Ireland, hastened the equipment of the long-promised armament from Brest. On the 20th of September the expedition put to sea. It consisted of one sail of the line (the *Hoche*) and eight frigates under Commodore Bompert, with 3000 land forces, of which General Hardy was Commander-in-chief. Having to combat with adverse winds, and bear far to the westward to avoid the British fleets, it was not until the 10th of October that the flotilla stood off the entrance to Lough Swilly.

At morning dawn on the 11th, while the French Commodore, with General Hardy and Theobald Wolfe Tone, on board the *Hoche*, was pressing forward in advance of his squadron to gain the bay and commence the debarkation of the troops, the fleet of Sir John Borlase Warren was discovered bearing down upon him ; and, passing the French frigates without firing a gun, the British Admiral singled out the *Hoche*. Bompert perceiving the hopeless situation of his squadron, instantly signalled his frigates to



retreat, and with desperate resolution prepared the *Hoche* for action. Engaged with three British ships of the line, he sustained with the most admirable courage an action of four hours' continuance—"One of the most desperate ever fought on the waters of the ocean." And it was not until after a fearful slaughter of his crew, with his noble vessel shattered and dismantled, that he struck to the irresistible force of the enemy.

Of Bompard's entire squadron three vessels only regained French ports—all the rest were captured. These could make but feeble resistance against British ships of the line; but the *Loire* frigate maintained a gallant defence. The conduct of her commander was noble almost to a fault. On board this vessel were three Irish officers—Corbett, Hamilton, and MacGuire—with the exception of Tone, the only Irishmen attached to the expedition. To preserve these gentlemen from capture and the attendant consequences, the captain of the *Loire* fought with a courage supported by despair. He had beaten off one of the enemy's vessels, and sustaining the fire of two British frigates, was bearing on in his course, when assailed by a third ship of war. All prospect of escape was abandoned; yet notwithstanding his hopeless condition, he still refused to strike. Addressing the Irish officers, "I have done," said he, "all that the law of honour and of arms can require, but I know the fate that awaits *you*, and I will fight the *Loire* till she sinks, or till the enemy shall blow us up together." But they insisted on his preserving the remnant of his gallant crew, and, on his surrender, had the singular good fortune to pass unnoticed amongst the French prisoners, and finally to reach France in safety.\* Tone, who had fought with desperate courage on board the *Hoche*, was identified, and, by the orders of General Lord Cavan, conveyed in fetters to Dublin.

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\* William Henry Hamilton, from whom I had the particulars of the capture of the *Loire*, had a narrow escape. The officers taken on board this vessel were not landed in Ireland, but conveyed direct to England. On an exchange of prisoners, the transport had but just sailed from London, when an order arrived from the Irish Secretary's office for Hamilton's detention. Like most of his contemporaries, poor Hamilton had a life chequered by a variety of fortune. In the year 1829, I bade a final adieu to this highly-gifted and generous-hearted fellow on his embarkation for Venezuela.

With the failure of General Hardy's expedition terminated the hopes of Ireland from foreign relief; and the capture of Theobald Wolfe Tone placed in the hands of the Government one of first founders of the Irish Union. Little hopes could be entertained of mercy for *him*, and from the moment of his arrest he was himself aware how inevitable was his fate. Even on his trial he did not attempt to deprecate it; and his only request was that the court should adjudge him the death of a soldier, and let him be shot by a platoon of grenadiers. He asked this indulgence, he said, rather in consideration of the uniform which he wore than from any personal regard to himself. This request was transmitted to Lord Cornwallis, together with the minutes of the court-martial; but the sentence of death, in the usual manner, was recorded. The announcement was made to Tone on the evening of Monday, the 11th of November, with his Excellency's order for the most public display of execution on the following morning; on which the fatal determination of the prisoner was taken to anticipate the execution of the sentence with his own hand.

For brilliancy of talent as well as for indefatigable assiduity in the cause of Ireland, Tone stood perhaps unrivalled by any of his compatriots. He had been the powerful supporter and moving spirit of the efforts of his Catholic countrymen for freedom, the avowed foe to British dominion, and the adventurous negotiator for the aid of France, "where," as he himself said, "attached to no party, without money, without interest, without intrigue, he had been raised, by the openness and integrity of his views, to a high and confidential rank in the Republican army." A detail of his trial, his eloquent and manly defence, and the affecting circumstances attending his last moments, are already before the public. The first Apostle, as he has been termed, of the Irish Union, he was the last (of the original members) who was sentenced to seal his attachment to it with his blood.

And thus passed away, in this unhappy contest, the boldest, and the loftiest, and the purest spirits that in our ill-fated country had for a century been brought into action—the martyrs to a cause unexampled in the annals of revolution for the devotion, the sufferings, and the fidelity of its adherents. Of the Leaders who survived some found refuge and distinc-



tion in foreign states,\* while a few (whose names I have intentionally omitted throughout) having done their duty in the hour of peril, resumed the ordinary occupations of life, and would not now perhaps have their political offences unnecessarily recorded.

For myself—should the reader feel any interest in my fate, it is briefly told. Proscribed by the Government, cut off from the society of those I loved, worn out by fatigue and privation, and impatient of their prolonged continuance—after I had learned the fate of my gallant brother, the ungenerous treatment towards the junior members of our family,† and the unmitigated severity of my father's imprisonment, and fearing for him too the worst effects from the hostility of government—careless of the result, I resolved, if

\* Thomas Addis Emmet became Attorney-General of the state of New York,—that happy country holds his honoured remains. Nelson, too, rests there—his memory respected and *his fame untarnished*. MacNeven and Sampson continue to cheer the progress of their country's freedom across the waves of the Atlantic. Harvey Morris (Montmorrenci), an accomplished soldier, whose friendship I highly valued; and John Tennent, who fell under the standard of Napoleon at the battle of Leipsic, and whose memory is endeared to me as the early friend and immediate political associate of Lowry and my brother, acquired distinguished rank in the French army. Arthur O'Connor—the senator and the soldier, he who at the shrine of his country's liberties sacrificed hereditary wealth and parliamentary honours, the affection of titled relatives and the smiles of power—whom we find, at one time, with the gallant Edward by his side, overawing by his honest eloquence the hirelings of the Irish Commons; and again, on the confines of the French Republic, the first to negotiate for its aid—who braved every danger from the impeachment of the minister to the dagger of the assassin—holds to this day the rank of General Officer in the same service. Hamilton Rowan—but not here should the fate of this virtuous citizen be recorded, for, too early distinguished in the race of patriotism, he was far removed from the disastrous scene. But the devoted list is honoured by his name—may his country long be favoured by the example of his exalted and undeviating virtue!

† One of my younger brothers, a fine interesting lad, of tender years, was marched a prisoner seventeen miles in irons, and confined, in the most sultry season of the year, in a small apartment, attached to a military station, rendered insupportable by the excessive heat from a furnace, at which the yeomanry were alternately employed in casting leaden bullets. Here, as long as animal nature retained the power of respiration, he was compelled to remain, when, fainting and exhausted, he was removed to the open air, but, on recovery, replaced in this infernal prison. His constitution never recovered the shock it sustained from this brutal treatment.



possible, to procure a trial. To effect this, I determined to apply to the fountain source. I left —— and reached the northern suburb of the city of Dublin at the silent hour of night. I proceeded to the house of a gentleman\* whose heart ever sympathised in the misfortunes of his country, and whose generous solicitude, on this occasion, for my safety, precluded all personal consideration for his own. Here I arranged my plans for procuring an interview with Lord Cornwallis. It is scarcely necessary to observe that to have exposed myself in the city would have defeated my purpose, and led to my immediate arrest. But I learned that his Excellency, who at that time resided at the Viceregal Lodge in the park, proceeded to Dublin Castle every morning for the dispatch of public business—always on horseback, and seldom accompanied by more than a few officers of his staff, with, perhaps, the additional attendance of some of the civic authorities. His route was uniformly by the circular road, in front of my friend's house, No. 2, Florinda-place. I never apprehended, from the high mind of Lord Cornwallis, any personal act which would be unbecoming the gentleman or the soldier but as I could not assure myself of the same courtesy from those loyal citizens who occasionally formed a portion of his suite, I regarded personal safety more than any effect which might be produced by the singularity of my appearance, and armed myself with a rapier, in the use of which I was pretty well skilled. I had not long to wait his Excellency's approach. I had prepared a short memorial, praying a removal of the proscription under which I laboured, or should this be refused, proposing to surrender on condition of immediate trial. I advanced with the paper in my hand. It seemed to attract his Excellency's attention. He halted, accompanied by two gentlemen in front, while the remainder of his suite remained a few paces behind. I bowed to his Excellency, and requested his permission to present him with the paper; but I was immediately apprised by one of the gentlemen in attendance, that "the Lord-Lieutenant could not receive any address or memorial except through the ordinary channel—and," he added, "more especially anything of a private nature." "Mine," I replied, "is not of a private nature—it refers to a public grievance, and claims his

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\* The late Thomas Segrave, Esq. of Borrins-town.

Excellency's attention ;" and, forgetful for a moment of the distinction between a rebel suppliant and the representative of the King, I laid my hand on the pommel of his Excellency's saddle, and with a considerable degree of earnestness pressed my suit. On his part there was no disinclination to attend, and he was in the act of extending his hand to receive my address, when the gentleman who had already objected to its presentation instantly pressed his horse (though not rudely) between us, as if to prevent the concession which his Excellency was evidently disposed to make. Then accosting me in a tone of mildness, by no means in unison at the moment with the temper of my own mind, "I am, Sir," said he, "the official channel through which his Excellency will receive your address : he cannot in point of etiquette accept it here. Send it to my office, and you may rest assured of an immediate presentation and an early reply." "And pray, Sir," said I (not, I fear, in the same courteous tone), "may I ask who you are? and where is your office?" "Captain Taylor, his Excellency's private secretary," was the reply : "my office is at Dublin Castle." We exchanged a salutation, and the Lord-Lieutenant and suite passed on.

Throughout the interview I was considerably excited, and had I encountered any personal interruption on the moment, I was not, I fear, in the temper of mind to have submitted to it. I returned to my friend and communicated the result of my interview. Mr. Segrave immediately proposed to be the bearer of my memorial to the Castle—an act of kindness which, under my circumstances, few friends would have been disposed to offer. He was received with politeness by Captain Taylor, who was totally divested of the little pride or consequence attached to office, and who, in the course of the same day, addressed the following note—

*"To Thomas Segrave, Esq.*

"Mr. Teeling's case requires investigation and reference to be made to the North. The result of the inquiry, with his Excellency's determination, shall be communicated with the least possible delay."

Not conceiving it prudent to remain in the neighbourhood of the city, I left my friend's house that night, having arranged matters for our future communication. In the



course of ten days after, I was made acquainted with the Lord-Lieutenant's determination.

"The case of Charles Hamilton Teeling has been investigated. His Excellency cannot accede to the prayer of his memorial.

"Mr. Teeling will be permitted to leave Ireland on giving the necessary security not to return."

But very interesting motives, which, at that early period of life, were calculated, in no slight degree, to influence my conduct, induced me to reject a course, which, under other circumstances, I might have endeavoured to pursue without his Excellency's permission—and, in the wilds of the mountain, I again sought that security which I was not permitted to enjoy in the less secluded scenes of life. I continued, however, unmolested, and, I believe, unsought by the Government authorities, until that unhappy period, when those exalted but too sanguine enthusiasts, Russell and Robert Emmett, whom I loved and mourned, though in their visionary projects I did not concur, raised once more the standard of revolt—to produce, alas! but unmitigated woe, and serve as a painful embellishment to the page of the historian who may record their melancholy and romantic fate.

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The "Rebellion" suppressed, the British Minister was emboldened to a development of the views which he had long entertained against the rights of an independent nation. His advances had been progressive, and, unhappily, but too successful. "He had," in the language of Mr. Fox, "sown the seed, he had nurtured the growth, and he now looked to reap the harvest." He had lighted the torch of civil war in the bosom of our country, and extinguished it in the blood of our people. He had planted discord in a land of peace, and armed a faction who became the unwitting instruments of their country's degradation. For the issue of his dark conspiracy he had now little apprehension, for the spirit was fled that would have *resisted* its consummation. The more insidious arts of state policy followed. The timid were overawed—the venal were purchased, and the credulous were beguiled. In two years after the occurrence of the events which I have narrated—Ireland was a Province!



## APPENDIX.

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### No. I.

MR. WILLIAM ORR, a respectable inhabitant of the county of Antrim, who was the first victim under the memorable Insurrection Act (statute of the 36th of George III.), was tried at Carrickfergus, in the summer assizes, 1797, before Lord Yelverton and Mr. Justice Chamberlain, charged with administering, to a soldier, the following oath :—

“ In the awful presence of God, I, *A. B.*, do voluntarily declare, that I will persevere in endeavouring to form a brotherhood of affection among *Irishmen* of every religious persuasion ; and that I will also persevere in my endeavours to obtain an equal, full, and adequate representation of *all* the people of Ireland. I do further declare, that neither hopes, fears, rewards, or punishments, shall ever induce me, directly or indirectly, to inform on, or give evidence against, any member or members of this or similar societies, for any act or expression of theirs, done or made, collectively or individually, in or out of this society, in pursuance of the spirit of this obligation.”

The first evidence against Mr. Orr was the soldier, Wheatley, who swore that Orr administered to him the above oath, etc., etc.

The second evidence was also a soldier, in the same regiment, who swore to the administering of an oath by Orr, but had no recollection of the substance of it.

The trial excited an uncommon degree of interest : it was regarded as an experiment of strength on the part of the Government against the people. The jury retired from their box, at six o'clock in the evening, to consider their verdict, and remained shut up during the night. The court was opened, by Lord Yelverton, at six on the following morning, when the jury requested to know whether they

might not find a qualified verdict, which would not affect the life of the prisoner. This being inadmissible, they retired, and, in some time after, returned with a verdict of *guilty*, at the same time recommending the prisoner to mercy.

On the following day, Mr. Orr was brought up to receive sentence, when his counsel made a motion in arrest of judgment. This was overruled by the court. The counsel then stated, that a most extraordinary event had just come to their knowledge, of which it was their duty to apprise the court. "Two of the jurors had made an affidavit, stating, that on the night of the trial a considerable quantity of spirituous liquour had been conveyed into the jury-room, and drunk by the jury, many of whom were greatly intoxicated. The two jurors who made the affidavit, admitted themselves also to have been in a state of intoxication; and one of them was threatened to be *prosecuted* as an *United Irishman*, if he did not concur in a verdict of guilty; until, at length worn out by fatigue and drink, and subdued by menaces, he did, contrary to his judgment, concur in that verdict." The affidavits having been produced, the counsel was interrupted by Mr. Justice Chamberlain, who declared, that such a statement ought not to be permitted; that it was evidently calculated to throw a discredit upon the verdict, and could not be the foundation of any motion to the court.

Mr. Orr was then remanded; and, on the next day, he was again brought up, when Lord Yelverton, in a very solemn and pathetic manner, pronounced sentence of death upon him. During the latter part, his Lordship's voice was scarcely audible, and at the close he burst into tears! Mr. Orr (immediately after the sentence) begged leave to say a few words:—"My Lord," said he, "the jury has convicted me of being a *felon*; my own heart tells me that their conviction is a *falsehood*. *I am not a felon*. If they have found me so improperly, it is worse for them than me—for I can forgive them. I will say but one word more, and that is to declare, in the awful presence of God, that the evidence against me was *grossly perjured*—*grossly and wickedly perjured!*"

Nothing could exceed the sensation which the condemnation of Orr excited in every quarter of Ireland. He was the first convicted under that statute which constituted the

administering of the United Irishman's oath an act of felony. Every exertion was made on the part of his family, his friends, and the country at large, to procure a suspension of the fatal sentence. The affidavit of the two jurors was followed up by the solemn declaration of others to the same effect. The principal witness, Wheatley, struck with remorse, came voluntarily forward, confessed his guilt, and deposed before a magistrate, on oath, that his testimony against Mr. Orr was *false*. The Viceregal court was crowded with petitions imploring that mercy, the extension of which is the best prerogative of the Crown. All proved ineffectual: execution was stayed for a time, and the sentence was three times respited, but these respites only served to embitter still further the cup of affliction for his unhappy family. Orr was executed at Carrickfergus, on the 14th of October, 1797.

The following particulars were communicated by letter from that town :—

“The inhabitants of this town, man, woman, and child, quitted the place this day, rather than be present at the execution of their hapless countryman, Mr. Orr. Some removed to the distance of many miles. Scarce a sentence was interchanged during the day, and every face presented a picture of the deepest melancholy, horror, and indignation. The military who attended the execution consisted of several thousand men, horse and foot, with cannon, and a company of artillery, the whole forming a hollow square. To these Mr. Orr read his dying declaration, in a clear, strong, manly tone of voice, and his deportment was firm, unshaken and impressive, to the last instant of his existence. He was a Protestant dissenter, of exemplary morals and of most industrious habits; and in the characters of husband, father, and neighbour, eminently amiable and respected. The love he bore his country was pure, ardent, and disinterested, spurning all religious distinctions; and his last accents articulated the prophetic hope, that Ireland would soon be emancipated.

“While the fate of the unfortunate Mr. Orr was undecided, the public seemed sunk in silent and torpid suspense; but the moment he was no more, an universal sentiment of grief, and horror, and execration resounded from every tongue. One would suppose this wretched people had not



been sufficiently familiarized to murder, to burning, to rape, to military massacre, to arbitrary captivity and to arbitrary banishment; one would think they had ceased to feel for their wretched kindred, their fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons, who are now rotting in jails, or packed up like cargoes of negroes—God knows for what market, or how they may be summarily disposed of on the way.

“At this crisis, so full of horror, we have a consolation in thinking, that certain atrocities can live only till they are understood; they are hideous spectres, which vanish with the morning. The mere executions of military force, terrible as they are, go no farther than the branches, and may be endured; but the blow that is levelled at the root of society, is a warning to mankind, that if they do not awake they must sleep for ever: there is no alternative between liberty and destruction, and if they are too abject to claim freedom is a right, they must fly to it as a refuge.

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## No. II.

SIR EDWARD CROSBIE.—This gentleman was brought to trial before a court-martial assembled in the town of Carlow, charged with “Traitorous and rebellious conduct, in aiding and abetting a most villainous conspiracy for the overthrow of his Majesty’s crown, and the extinction of all loyal subjects.” Sir Edward Crosbie was a man warmly attached to the liberties of his country, and a foe to oppression in every shape. It was never insinuated by his enemies that he had borne arms, nor was any proof adduced of his having embraced the United system. An unsuccessful attempt had been made to surprise the town and garrison of Carlow, near which Sir Edward Crosbie resided. The plan was badly arranged, and the consequences were most disastrous to the assailants. A considerable popular force had assembled near Sir Edward’s demesne, from whence they commenced their march upon the town. This, whatever might have been his disposition, he had not the power to prevent. His servants, who were implicated in the transaction, were *tortured* to give evidence against their master. Some had the firmness to resist, and preferred the excruciating lash to the

impeachment of innocence. Others, who had witnessed the agony of their companions, had not the courage to imitate their conduct, and a feeling of self-preservation led them to give testimony, but to a very limited extent, against the unfortunate Baronet. The witnesses whom he called in the course of his trial, and whose testimony, as it appears by subsequent investigation, must have confirmed the falsehood of the charge, were not permitted to enter the court ! A verdict of guilty was pronounced against him. The sentence was confirmed by Sir Charles Asgill, General of the district ; and, at a late and unusual hour, with the most shameful precipitancy, carried into immediate execution. The body was mutilated, and the head fixed on a pike and elevated from the top of the county jail, within the immediate view of his family mansion. On a representation of this circumstance to Lord Camden, he had the humanity to order the body to be given up to the disconsolate widow. Lady Crosbie could not procure for it the right of Christian burial. No minister of the Established Church, of which Sir Edward was a member, would dare to preform this last solemn duty ; she was necessitated to deposit the mutilated remains of her husband within the precincts of her own garden. The insults offered by the military to this excellent lady became so alarming that she was obliged, for personal security, to abandon her home and fly for refuge to England.

The family of Sir Edward Crosbie have published, " in justice to his memory, a narrative of his apprehension, trial, and execution, with minutes of the court-martial, etc." The authors of this publication have cautiously avoided any reflection on the government of the country, " which," say they, " we certainly do not think responsible for the abuses of that unlimited discretionary power which the unhappy circumstances of the times rendered necessary to be adopted. Our object has simply been to rescue the memory of the deceased from that disgrace which is deservedly attached to the conduct of a rebel." Was it then a *disgrace* to resist the tortures, the rapes, the massacres, the house-burnings, the transportations without trial ; the most cruel and wantonly abusive exercise of power that ever scourged a nation ? I have already expressed my respect for the amiable character of Sir Edward Crosbie, which ranked sufficiently high in the estimation of his countrymen, without that exceptionable



line of defence which has been considered essential to its justification. Are the moral qualities of man to be valued in proportion to the heartless indifference with which he views the tyranny of the oppressor, and his total want of sympathy for the wrongs of the oppressed? The cold-blooded, calculating individual, who, in a national struggle, awaits the issue of the contest to profit by its failure or success, has little claim to protection on either side, and justly merits the odium of both; but the open and manly foe respects, in the conduct of others, the principle which influenced his own. It has been my fortune to have experienced this on different occasions; and, though political enmities have run high, the milder feelings of personal friendship have remained unshaken. It is foreign, indeed, to my intention to offer any observation that could either wound the feelings of an amiable family, or take from the merits of a man whose memory commands my respect; but I am by no means bound to observe any deliacacy in a retrospective view of Lord Camden's government. It was the scourge of my country—the bane of her happiness—a foul engine, exercised for the subversion of her rights and the extinction of her independence. Fatal was the breeze that wafted him to our shores. On his arrival, he found us as a nation happy and united—at his departure, he left us clad in mourning, torn by dissensions, exhausted by a sanguinary struggle—an easy prey to the wily artifice of his successor.

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### No. III.

HENRY and JOHN SHEARES were natives of the city of Cork, gentlemen by birth, and barristers by profession. They were brothers, reared and educated together, and remarkable for the most fraternal attachment through life. Deprived of their father, they were the prop and solace of an aged mother—the protectors and pride of an only sister. Embarked in the cause of United Ireland, though of superior talents, the native ardour of their dispositions carried them beyond the bounds of prudence, and they became dupes to the artifice of a man, who, from his first interview with them, contemplated



their destruction. This occurrence took place in the month of May, 1798, when it was evident to every man of common perception that the fate of Ireland was about to be decided by the sword. At this period, and for a length of time previous to it, a considerable portion of the native militia force in Ireland was favourable to the views of the people—in fact, associated with them. Government was sensible of the measure, and, in consequence, kept the former as much as possible apart from all intercourse with the latter. For this purpose, as well as to improve military discipline, several encampments had been formed throughout the country. One established at Lehaunstown, a few miles distant from the city of Dublin, contained, with other troops, the King's County regiment of militia, in which John Warnford Armstrong held the rank of Captain. This officer, who affected to be warmly impressed with sentiments favourable to liberty and the cause in which the great majority of his countrymen were embarked, was introduced by a mutual friend to Henry and John Sheares. Several interviews followed, and the most unreserved communications took place. But, as appeared from the evidence of Armstrong, on the trial of these high-minded but too confiding men, all their conversations were regularly noted down by him, and communicated to two officers of his regiment (Clibborn and L'Estrange), and frequently, as he also added, to Lord Castlereagh. The brothers had most erroneously conceived that, through the agency of Armstrong, they would be enabled to effect a serious impression on Lehaunstown Camp; and Armstrong favoured the idea. In this I apprehend the Messrs. Sheares acted on their own responsibility, and independent of authorities who would have been more circumspect and guarded in their communications—they were zealous, they were ardent—imprudent because too confiding, and censurable, perhaps, because unsuccessful—but their *integrity* was unquestionable.

The trial of the Messrs. Sheares commenced at an early hour on Thursday morning, the 12th of July, and, without any adjournment, was not terminated until near eight on the morning of Friday, the 13th, when a verdict of *guilty* was returned against both. The scene of affection and distress which followed caused a deep sensation throughout the court. The brothers, clasped in each other's arms, seemed

deprived of all powers of utterance, and were only relieved by a profuse flood of tears.

The court, after conviction of the prisoners, adjourned for a few hours. When it resumed its sitting, Henry and John Sheares were placed at the bar and interrogated in the usual manner, what they had to say why judgment of death should not be awarded against them?

Henry first addressed the court. He requested time to prepare himself for death, and his family for the catastrophe that awaited him. "I have," said he, "a wife and six children. I hope the court, in its humanity, will allow a reasonable time to settle my affairs and make provision for them." Here the sensibility of his feelings overpowered him, and he was unable to proceed.

John Sheares then addressed the court. He spoke with a manly eloquence which rivetted the attention of all around him. He deprecated, in bold and energetic language, an accusation much dwelt on by the court, grounded on a passage contained in a rough manuscript draft of a manifesto or proclamation found in his house; and which, if not proved, was at least assumed to be in the handwriting of the prisoner. This accusation amounted to a charge of holding out instructions not to grant quarter to those who should turn their arms against their native country. "Do not, my Lords," said Sheares, "imagine that I am about to declaim against the verdict of the jury, or the conduct of those concerned in the trial. I am about to refer to a charge against which my soul shudders, and if I had not this opportunity of renouncing it, no strength of mind or courage could support me. If there be any friend or acquaintance of mine in this crowded court, who could believe me capable of uttering the recommendation of refusing quarter to a yielding foe, I am willing to be considered the reputed wretch which I am not. Here, while I linger for a moment,—here, in the presence of that God before whom I shall shortly appear, I declare it was the favourite doctrine of my heart that *no human being should suffer death but when absolute necessity required it*. I make this declaration in justice to myself, when sealing my life with that breath which cannot be suspected of falsehood. For myself, my Lords, I have no favour to ask of this court—the law says that I shall suffer, and it sees that I am ready



to suffer. But I have a favour to ask that does not relate to myself. I have a brother whom I have ever loved dearer than myself, but it is not from affection for him alone that I am induced to make the request. He is a man, and, therefore, I hope, prepared to die, if he stood as I do ; but, though I do not stand unconnected, yet he stands more dearly connected. I do not pray that he should not die. I do not pray a pardon—it is not in the power of your court to grant it. But I pray that the husband, the father, the brother, and the son, all comprised in one person, who holds these relations dearer than life, may have such respite for the arrangement of his affairs as the court in its humanity and discretion may allow. I have other motives for urging this request ; consideration for an aged and revered mother, a dear sister, a wife the most affectionate and beloved, and six children, who, by the hurried execution of my brother, will be left without provision or protector. Of all the sons of our revered mother we are the last. Two have lately perished in the service of the crown. Dispose of me, I pray you, with all the swiftness which you may conceive public justice to require ; but grant my brother a respite, that, in the delay of his sentence, his family may acquire strength to bear up against the accumulated burthen of their misfortunes. This is all I wish—it is all I ask. I shall remember it to my latest breath, and will offer up my prayers for you to that Being who has endued us all with sensibility to feel.”

Lord Carleton replied—“In the awful duty imposed on me, no man can be more sensibly affected than I am ; because I knew the very valuable and respectable father and mother from whom you are both descended. I knew and revered their virtues. One of them, happily for himself, is now no more ; the other, for whom I have the highest personal respect, probably by the events of this day may be hastened into futurity. It does not rest with us, after the conviction which has taken place, to hold out mercy ; that is for another place, and I am afraid that, in the present situation of public affairs, it would be difficult to grant the indulgence which you (addressing himself to John Sheares) so pathetically request for your brother. With respect to one object, of soliciting time for your brother, unfortunately it could be of no use, because, by the attainder, he will forfeit all his property, real and personal—nothing to be settled will



remain." His Lordship terminated a lengthened discourse by pronouncing sentence of death on the prisoners.

The Attorney-General\* immediately followed Lord Carleton, and prayed for the prompt execution of the sentence. "I could," said he, "with great sincerity allow any indulgence of time, if the circumstances of the country could, by possibility, admit of it. But, my Lords, I have a great duty to discharge, and must pray that execution may be done upon the prisoners to-morrow."

*Court.*—"Be it so."

The few hours which intervened between their sentence and execution were passed by the prisoners in the most exemplary exercise of piety and devotion, and in conformity with the formulas of the Established Church, of which they were members. They died with becoming fortitude and Christian resignation. After the usual ceremony of decapitation, the bodies were delivered to their friends for interment.

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#### No. IV.

##### NEGOTIATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND STATE PRISONERS.

"AT this time," says Dr. M'Neven, "without any concert with those individuals who were afterwards employed to negotiate on behalf of the state prisoners, and even without their knowledge, a plan was set on foot for rescuing the country from the vindictive massacre of its defeated inhabitants. Persons not at all implicated in the insurrection had taken up the measure, and the old Lord Charlemont was represented to the state prisoners as being desirous of being useful in procuring a retreat from all persecution for the past. Though too infirm to be an active agent between them and the government, he would undertake, it was alleged, to obtain a satisfactory guarantee of whatever terms might be settled. Accordingly Mr. Francis Dobbs, one of the members in Parliament for his borough, prompted as well by innate philanthropy as by the patriotic wishes of

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\* John Toler, afterwards *Lord Norbury*.

his noble friend, went round, with the permission of Government, accompanied by one of the high Sheriffs, to the different prisoners, and obtained the assent of most of them to an agreement of a somewhat similar import with that which was afterwards concluded. In this visit he publicly assured his hearers that the scope and the object of his mission was to procure a most important advantage for the country at large, to put a stop to further carnage, and to terminate, without the infliction of more calamity, an insurrection which had failed."

Of the state prisoners, Samuel Neilson was the first mover in this negotiation. He has left an interesting record of the principal facts which relate to it, and which will probably be shortly presented to the public through a very distinguished literary channel. A perfect knowledge of the nature of this negotiation, and the spirit with which it was conducted, may be acquired from the following powerful document from the pen of Arthur O'Connor.

*"To Lord Castlereagh.*

"MY LORD,—When it is considered that five months have elapsed since you undertook to pledge the faith and honour of Lord Cornwallis's administration, in a transaction which it shall be the business of this letter to explain, it cannot be imputed to me, that I have been actuated by any unmanly impatience under the insults, the injuries, and the calumnies to which your dishonourable conduct, for a time, has exposed me; or that what I shall say has been the result of passion and not of the most mature deliberation. I shall first state the transaction, in the order in which it has happened, and then draw such conclusions and offer such remarks, as will place your conduct in such points of view as that they that run may read.

"I will not lose time in ascertaining how or from whom the idea of proposing terms for saving the lives of Bond and Byrne originated; it was a circumstance of which I had no knowledge. On the 24th. July last, Mr. Dobbs and the Sheriff entered my prison with a written paper, signed by seventy state prisoners, purposing "to give such information as was in their power, of arms, ammunition, and schemes of warfare" (of which it is now manifest they knew little or nothing), "and to consent to leave Ireland, provided the lives of Bond and Byrne (both under sentence of death) should be spared." I refused to sign it, not only from a detestation of entering into any conditions with those who



composed the councils of Lord Cornwallis's administration ; but because in the massacre of my unarmed countrymen, still raging, I did not think that any object which was not general could warrant me, in whom such confidence was placed by so many millions of my countrymen, to enter into any such compact ; and because the possibility of its being attributed to a desire to save my own life, in the peculiar situation I stood in, was in my mind an insuperable objection, if there had been no other. Besides, it seemed to me that to save the lives of Bond and Byrne, enough had signed their self-sacrifice to induce the ministers, already sated with blood (as you and Lord Clare appeared to be when we met), to acquiesce ; but in this I was deceived ; a council sat on the fate of Byrne—he was executed. In this barter of blood, although you had lessened your quantum by half, yet you raised your demands for the price of the other, and proposed to those who had signed the paper, *that they should deliver up names*. The heroism and utter contempt with which so many thousands of my brave countrymen had met death in preference to life, and those profuse rewards they were pressed to accept to betray their associates, and the unparalleled fortitude with which they endured the most excruciating tortures, not only at *Bresford's riding-house, Sandys's-provot, the old Custom-house, and the Royal Exchange*, but those torturings and lashings which resounded in every hamlet throughout the nation, rather than violate the principles to which they had sworn, should have deterred you from offering a proposition so truly dishonourable. You may enjoy all the satisfaction your heart can reap from being the author of such a proposal, whilst the expression of the contempt and abhorrence with which it was rejected, rests with those to whom you proposed it.

“Immediately after this base proposition had been retracted, on the eve of Bond's execution (a beloved friend, whom I myself had brought into the undertaking), surrounded with the horrors of a charnel-house, where, day after day, I had seen the companions and friends of my heart dragged before some tribunal or other, “*from whose bourn no traveller ever returns,*” whilst not an hour was not the messenger of some direful disasters, where my countrymen, without leaders, ammunition, or arms, continued the victims ; thus environed with horrors, it was intimated to me, that at the council which had sat on the fate of Byrne, the



parties had been nearly balanced—those who were sated with the blood that had flowed, and those that were not ; that the latter, who had been triumphant in the case of Byrne, had made my consenting to sacrifice myself a *sine qua non*, and that my compliance would incline the balance in favour of the party which had declared against shedding more blood, of which party Lord Cornwallis was not only the head, but that he was the father of this sentiment to which a part of the council now professed to be converts. How far this intimation was fact it was impossible for me to ascertain ; but whether I considered the extent and value of the object, in putting a stop to the indiscriminate massacre of a disarmed people, the truth of which, though not the extent, has been so fully proved by some of those inquiries which have been made by Lord Cornwallis, so much to his credit ; or whether I considered it as affording my countrymen an opportunity to make their retreat from an effort not worse conducted than it had been unwisely concerted, as putting a stop to those horrible tortures, so universally practised to extort confessions, it appeared to me as holding out advantages too considerable for my beloved countrymen, to authorize me, in the first instance, to decline holding an interview with the Irish Government, to try how far any sacrifice I could make, consistent with honour, could enable me to obtain objects so devoutly to be wished. With this view I yielded to the solicitations which were made to me, to undertake to make terms for the country with those in whose hands the Government was vested. I consented to meet you for this purpose ; but foreseeing that the misrepresentations and falsehood which have been practised would be attempted, I expressly stipulated that some men, upon whose honour I could rely, should accompany me ;—Emmet and M'Nevin were accordingly joined with me upon the part of the state prisoners.

“A short time after we had been in one of the lower apartments in the Castle you entered, when I accosted you, stipulating that we should have the right of publishing, in order to secure us from calumny. You then requested that we would consent to the Chancellor's being present ; Mr. Cooke made a third, on the part of Government, as I suppose, in his official capacity. When we were all assembled, the first demand I made was, ‘that I might not be required to sign any conditions with the Irish Government ; but that I

might be brought to trial upon whatever evidence could be produced against me, and that whatever quarter Government might give to a disarmed people, might be granted without forcing me to sacrifice myself for an equivalent.' *This you would not assent to*, which convinced me that it was predetermined, as I had been informed that my devoting myself was made a *sine qua non*, and that without it the system of blood would still be triumphant. I told you you had no evidence whatsoever against me, *which you did not deny*. Having put it beyond doubt that a regard for self or for life had no share in the part I was now forced to adopt to save the blood of my countrymen, and that I was throwing myself between them and the persecution to which they still were a prey, my next concern was to make the terms as wide as I could. To this end I observed that as the information I should condition to give might be made a subject for grounding a charge of constructive treason against the whole Union, as had been attempted so widely in England, I could not consent to give any information whatever, unless I was assured that no more blood should be shed for anything that had passed in the Union. The Chancellor affirmed that constructive treason was law, and that if his advice had been followed every member of the Union would have been prosecuted for treason; to which I replied that he must have prosecuted the people of Ireland to extermination, as nearly the whole population was of the Union, against which he was to draw his bill of indictment; a fact from which neither you nor the Chancellor could withhold your assent. In answer to my demand of amnesty you assured me that Government would not shed any more blood for any act hitherto done in the Union, except for murder, which you did not suppose I would wish to have excepted; but that, though you would assure me that no more blood should be shed, you would not consent that we should have any part of the credit. Convinced from every information we had obtained that the murders which had been committed upon the people were, beyond all comparison, more numerous than those which had been committed by them, and being equally abhorrent of murder, be the perpetrators of what side they may, we assured you that we were desirous that murderers of no side should receive any quarter; and as to the credit of putting a stop to the farther effusion of the blood of my countrymen, I did



not contend for what you called the credit, I contended only for that performance for which we were to give the equivalent. You then asked if it was to be understood that the information we might give, in consequence of the agreement into which we were going to enter, was to be given as ours, or whether we would insist on its being given generally, without specifying by whom it was given. To this we answered that we insisted on the right of publishing the whole of whatever information we might give, whether verbal or written (a right I had set out with securing), specifying particularly that if any calumnies or misrepresentations should be published against us we should be free to refute them.

“Having done all in my power to procure a trial, and to avoid entering into any conditions with the Government—having put it beyond all doubt that what they called their mercy was to be purchased at my expense—I desired to see Lord Cornwallis, on whose character, as a man of strict honour, we relied for the religious fulfilment of the conditions. This you evaded, assuring me that it was of no consequence how loosely the agreement was worded; that Lord Cornwallis’s honour was pledged to us for the religious performance; and Lord Clare made use of these remarkable expressions: ‘It comes to this—either you must trust the Government or it must trust you—a Government which could violate engagements thus solemnly made, neither could stand nor deserved to stand;’ whilst you followed up his declaration with the strongest assurances that the whole of what had been agreed to should be observed on the part of the Government with the greatest liberality and good faith. Thinking it was impossible that such solemn assurances could be made to be so soon and so grossly violated, and seeing how difficult it would be to reduce the whole of the conditions to writing, so as to express all our stipulations without making it appear what title you had to the *credit* you claimed for stopping the effusion of blood, which was the great object for which I had devoted myself; leaving the stipulations to the religious observance, liberal construction, and good faith to which you had so solemnly pledged Lord Cornwallis’s honour, the following was drawn up:—

“That the undersigned state prisoners in the three prisons of Newgate, Kilmainham, and Bridewell, engage to



give every information in their power of the whole of the internal transactions of the United Irishmen, and that each of the prisoners shall give detailed information of every transaction that has passed between the United Irishmen and foreign states ; but that the prisoners are not, by naming or describing, to implicate any person whatever, and that they are ready to emigrate to such country as shall be agreed on between them and Government, and give security not to return to this country without the permission of Government, and not to pass into an enemy's country if on their so doing they are to be freed from prosecution; and also Mr. Oliver Bond be permitted to take the benefit of this proposal. The state prisoners also hope that the benefit of this proposal may be extended to such persons in custody, or not in custody, as may choose to benefit by it.'

“ ‘29th July, 1798.’

“ ‘Signed by 73 persons.

“ *The last sentence was added to mark that more was conditioned for than could be expressed.* Pursuant to this agreement, at the instance of Government, Emmet, M'Nevin, and I drew up a memoir containing thirty-six pages, giving an account of the origin, principles, conduct, and views of the Union, which we signed and delivered to you on the 4th of last August. On the 6th Mr. Cooke came to our prison, and after acknowledging that the memoir was a perfect performance of our agreement, he told us that Lord Cornwallis had read it, but, as it was a vindication of the Union, and a condemnation of the ministers, the Government and legislature of Ireland, he could not receive it, and therefore he wished we would alter it. We declared we would not change one letter; it was all true, and it was the truth we stood pledged to deliver. He then asked us, if Government should publish such parts only as might suit them, whether we would refrain from publishing the memoir entire. We answered that having stipulated for the liberty of publication we would use that right when, and as we should feel ourselves called on; to which he added, that if we published he would have to *hire* persons to answer us, that then, he supposed, we would reply, by which a paper war would be carried on without end between us and the Government. Finding that we would not suffer the memoir to be garbled, and that the literary contest between us and these hirelings was not likely to turn out to your credit, it

was determined to examine us before the *secret* committees, whereby a more complete selection might be made out of the memoir, and all the objectionable truths, with which it was observed it abounded, might be suppressed. For the present I shall only remark that of one hundred pages, to which the whole of the information I gave to the Government and to the secret committees amounts, *only one page has been published.*

“After the reports were nearly finished, M’Nevin asked you, on the 11th of August, if you were convinced that we had fulfilled our part of the conditions; you acknowledged that we had most fully; he then requested that you would perform your part; you replied that no time should be lost, and that you would be glad to have a conversation with us, to adjust the manner in which it should be carried into effect, but having neglected to call, M’Nevin wrote you the following letter:—

“MY LORD,—However anxious my fellow-prisoners and myself are to be relieved from our present disagreeable situation, we have forborne to trouble Government with it, until the committees should have reported, or we have been examined; but as the season is advancing, and as we shall want some time to settle our affairs, I am desired by my companions, and encouraged by your Lordship’s obliging offer on Saturday, in a conversation on the subject, to request you would do us the honour of naming, for that purpose, the earliest time that may be convenient to you.—I have the honour to be, etc.,  
WM. J. M’NEVIN.

“‘17th August, 1798.’

“The day following Mr. Secretary Cooke came to our prison, and told us he came on the part of Government to fulfil their agreement, with the good faith and liberal construction they were pledged to, that we were at liberty to go where we pleased, provided we left the British dominions—that whatever parts of the conditions concerned us, after our having passed into exile, would be secured by act of parliament—that therefore the only part which remained to be settled was the nature of the accommodation we should require to enable us to dispose of our property prior to our departure. Here was a full and unequivocal declaration of the conditions, for the performance of which you had pledged Lord Cornwallis’ honour, delivered to us by Mr. Secretary Cooke in his official capacity, one of those who



was present when the agreement was made, and now sent expressly by you to define it.

"Immediately after the committees had reported, but before their reports had been printed, the newspapers (notoriously by their own declaration under your absolute dominion) inserted the most impudent falsehoods with respect to what we had sworn, and in many respects they went even farther than the reports. As to the reports, however, we could have waited until we had read them, and then we would have published the whole of what we had delivered, leaving the world to judge how far the facts we had stated, or those vouched for by the committees, were worthy of credit. We published a contradiction of those scurrilous falsehoods which appeared in the newspapers, adding that by our agreement *we were not by naming, or describing, to implicate any person whatever.* The manner in which this was taken up by those men who sat in the House of Commons of Ireland is upon record, and will form a precious morsel for the future historian of that illustrious body; I am not now writing their history, I am detailing your conduct. Conscious as you must have been that in contradicting those infamous falsehoods we were doing no more than exercising a right, for which we had strictly conditioned, why did you not come forward in that fair and honourable manner, to which a regard for truth, for the House, and for your own honour so imperiously bound you, and avow the existence of your stipulations with us for publication, and of our written agreement, somewhat of which on the second day the House learned, from it being published by General Nugent at Belfast? You did neither one thing nor the other; but you did that which convinced the discerning part of the world that there was something which you dare not avow, nor yet dare disclaim; but although you had neither the spirit nor honour to defend your own stipulations, you had the meanness to censure; and, to fill up the measure of the perfidious part you had acted, you sent one of those very men to my prison whose hands were reeking with the blood of my beloved, valued, . . . friend—Edward's precious blood, for which, in those times of stalking butchery, not even the semblance of an inquisition has been had. This was the Mute you sent with orders to circumscribe my prison to the still narrower limits of a cell. For two months these orders were varied



with the most fantastical absurdity ; but all with a view to make a prison more irksome, adding wanton cruelty to the basest perfidy.

“The next act, which followed close on the heels of this, was your declaration that you had reserved a power to detain us during the war ; a power not only repugnant to the wording of the written agreement, loosely as it was drawn, but to the interpretation you yourself had so lately given by Mr. Cooke ; a power which was a direct violation of that liberal construction and good faith, so often and so solemnly promised. As Mr. Cooke had been the bearer a few days before of the real conditions, a fresh character was thought necessary ; accordingly, Mr. Marsden was the messenger of this gross infraction of all that had gone before. Having now passed all bounds of honour and truth, no wonder you should shudder at publication : a bill was to be brought into Parliament, said to be conformable to an agreement, which, according to Lord Clare, ‘a Government that could violate, neither could stand nor deserved to stand.’ You are the minister who furnished the facts to the Parliament ; and if gross and palpable falsehoods have been delivered, you are that minister who has dared to deceive them. It is asserted in this bill, in which I find my name in company with eighty-nine others, ‘that I had confessed myself conscious of flagrant and enormous guilt, expressed contrition, and humbly implored mercy, on condition of being transported, banished, or exiled to such foreign country as to his Majesty, in his royal wisdom, shall seem meet.’ On reading this bill, shortly after it was brought into the House, not one of the ninety, whose names are inserted, that was not astonished at these unfounded assertions ; and before it was passed Neilson wrote the following letter to the editor of the *Courier* :—

“‘SIR,—Having seen in your paper of the 16th instant a publication purporting to be a copy of the bill now in its way through the Irish Parliament, relative to the emigration of ninety persons in custody, under charges of high treason, which states that they had acknowledged their *crimes*, retracted their *opinions*, and *implored pardon*, I thought myself peculiarly called upon to set you right, by enclosing to you a copy of the compact, as settled between us and the Government, which cannot by any means authorize such a statement : none of us, so far as I know, did either acknowledge a crime, retract an opinion, or implore pardon

—our object was to stop an effusion of blood.—I am, Sir,  
your obedient, humble servant, SAMUEL NEILSON.

“ ‘New Prison, Dublin, 12th Sept., 1798.’

“The copy of the above was enclosed to you in the following letter :—

“ ‘MY LORD,—Feeling, in common with my fellow-prisoners, extremely hurt at a publication which tends to brand our names with infamy, I think it incumbent on me, who commenced the negotiation, to justify our characters and motives, by setting the whole in a true point of view; at the same time wishing to pay all due respect to Government, I trouble you with a copy of the letter, which I mean to send by this night’s post. I also take the liberty of sending you the newspaper, with the offensive passages underscored.—I am, etc.,

“ ‘12th Sept., 1798.

“ ‘SAMUEL NEILSON.

“ ‘(To Lord Castlereagh).’

“In a day or two Neilson enclosed the two preceding letters in the following, which he wrote to one of the prisoners of Kilmainham :

“ ‘MY DEAR FRIEND,—About two hours after I sent the enclosed letters to Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Cooke and a gentleman, whom I did not know, but believe to be Marsden, called here and sent up for me. I met them. Mr. Cooke had the letter in his hand. “Why, Mr. Neilson, are you losing your judgment altogether?” “No, Sir, you took that from me some time ago.” “But, in earnest, will you publish or not?” “I will.” “Well, then, I am commanded by his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant to tell you that he will consider its publication an infraction of the whole negotiation, and executions will go on as formerly.” “Pray, Sir, how is it possible we can let our names go to the world and to posterity branded with infamy.” “I see, Mr. Neilson, what actuates you, it is a feeling for the honour of your fellow-prisoners and their friends.” “It is.” “*Well, have you no feeling for their lives; for we can convict the most of you?*” “I do not care this moment you would order me to be hanged.” “Very true, but are all the rest of the prisoners of the same opinion?” “I suppose not, but they can never in justice incur the resentment of Government for my act.” “I once more assure you it will be considered as an infraction, and we will act accordingly.”—Yours, etc.,

‘SAMUEL NEILSON.’



“The Septemberizing stile of these menaces would astonish in any other country than mine—

Alas, poor country ;  
 Almost afraid to know itself ! it cannot  
 Be called our mother, but our grave ; where nothing,  
 But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile ;  
 Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rend the air,  
 Are made, not marked ; where violent sorrow seems  
 A modern ecstasy ; the dead man's knell  
 Is there scarce ask'd for whom ; and good men's lives  
 Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
 Dying or ere they sicken.

“I am now stating facts, by and by I will offer some comments. On the 25th of September I wrote to Lord Cornwallis, demanding the fulfilment of the engagements to which you had pledged him ; after nearly a month had elapsed, on the 21st of October, I received a letter from Mr. Cooke, informing me that we should emigrate to America, and that we should be obliged to give security not to return to Europe. This was the third interpretation of the agreement, a direct violation of the written compact, and totally different from those terms of which Mr. Cooke had been the bearer ; yet, the very next day Mr. Marsden came to our prison to tell us that the whole purport of the letter we received the day before, all was revoked, and that in a few days a fifth interpretation would be notified to us by Government. After six weeks had elapsed we received the fifth interpretation of the agreement in a scroll of your writing, brought here by Mr. Marsden, of which the following is a literal copy :—

“‘SAMUEL NEILSON, THOMAS RUSSEL, THO. A. EMMET, W. J. M'NEVIN, HENRY JACKSON,	MATT. DOWLING, JOHN SWEETMAN, JOSEPH CUTHBERT. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, JOHN SWEENEY,	HUGH WILSON, JOHN CHAMBERS, MILES DUIGENAN, JOHN CORMICK, DEANE SWIFT.
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““The above persons cannot be liberated at present. The other state prisoners named in the Banishment Bill will be permitted to retire to any neutral country on the Continent, giving security not to pass into an enemy's country. A pardon conformable to the Banishment Bill will be passed previous to their departure. The Lord-Lieutenant will be glad to extend this indulgence to the prisoners now excepted, as soon as he can do it consistent with the attention which he owes to the public safety, and laments that a change of circumstances has rendered the present precaution necessary.’ Here all respect for all formal conditions is laid by, and a



state necessity is made the pretext, which, if admitted as a justifiable plea for breach of engagement, at once destroys every principle of good faith, honour, or justice.

“Now that I have cited the principal facts, I shall proceed to a recapitulation. Having stated that I forced you to an acknowledgement that you had no evidence against me, that I demanded a trial upon whatever shadow of evidence you could find, and that you would not grant one; having stated, that placed in the excruciating alternative of subjecting myself to be calumniated as one who had betrayed my countrymen with a view to save my own life, when I was really sacrificing myself to save theirs, or should I decline this, to be calumniated as one who would not consent to devote himself to save his country’s blood—driven to this cruel situation by you, and which the critical state of my country obliged me to decide on; in the face of God and of the world I ask you, with what truth, with what justice, with what honour, have you dared to represent me to the world, as a man ‘who had confessed himself conscious of flagrant and enormous guilt, as one who had expressed contrition, and humbly implored his Majesty’s mercy?’ Gracious God! Would it not be supposed that a minister, who delivered such facts to a Parliament, and to the world, had some one document upon which he could found such assertions, which went directly to blast the honour and character of so many men. Nay, will it be believed, that every one of those daring assertions has been made in direct opposition to every word that was uttered, and every line that was written by these men, who are thus vilely calumniated. I challenge you to produce a syllable that has come from me, verbal or written, which can be tortured into a confession of a consciousness of guilt, an expression of contrition, or an imploring of mercy. Read the memorial I signed and delivered to you—is there a word that can warrant it? So directly is the contrary the truth, that it is expressly set forth in the memoir, that we would never abandon the principles upon which we had acted. When you made these false and daring assertions of *guilt*, *contrition*, and *mercy*, had you so soon forgotten that you had sent us the memoir to alter, because it contained a vindication of the United Irish, and a condemnation of the ministers, the Government, and the legislature? Or had you forgotten that we had refused, in the most positive terms, even to alter a letter? Was it because I

requested not to be forced to sign any compact with Government, and that I demanded a trial, and that you would not grant it, that you have represented me as one who had most humbly implored his Majesty's mercy? With what truth have you talked of extending mercy to me, or of the gratitude I owe for the mercy I have experienced, when it is a fact you cannot deny that you forced me to devote myself to procure conditions for others? Ask Mr. Cooke of the diabolical means he has used to procure evidence against me, by abusing the name and influence of a relative, to a purpose at which the most unnatural relative would shudder. Ask those underlings of the enormous sums that have been offered to supply the place of that evidence you could never obtain. Commence an inquiry into the orders by which those shots were fired when I was confined in the Castle; and examine the wife of the gaoler—she will tell you of a third attempt being made, of which her being in child-birth prevented her giving evidence at Maidstone; she will tell you of the money she saw paid by one of the King's messengers to the assassin. Are these acts of mercy for which I am so deeply indebted? When you have considered these facts read the agreement, and say in what instance does it imply a consciousness of guilt and expression of contrition, or most humbly imploring mercy. But these are not the only instances in which you stand detected of having dared to advance the most palpable falsehoods. The words in that part of the agreement which has been committed to writing are—'*and that they are ready to emigrate to such country as shall be agreed on between them and Government;*' with what truth then have you informed the Parliament '*that we had humbly implored his Majesty's pardon, on condition of being transported, banished, or exiled to such foreign country, as to his Majesty shall seem meet.*' When the written compact could so easily be produced to the world (nay, when it had been published by General Nugent), in which it is expressly conditioned that the country to which we were to emigrate should be one mutually agreed on between us and Government, is it not astonishing that any minister could be hardy enough to inform the Parliament that we had conditioned to be *transported, banished, or exiled to such country as the King shall think meet?* Having fastened those unparalleled falsehoods on their author, I dare you to make your defence. Tell the



world how demanding a trial, and a refusal on the part of the Government in a country *said to be free*, can be construed into *humbly imploring mercy*. Tell the world how the most positive assertion of the firmest adherence to the principles upon which I had acted, and the most direct refusal to retract a particle of the assertion, can by any force of language be converted into a confession of conscious guilt, or an avowal of contrition. A convict of these unblushing breaches of truth, can it be a matter of wonder that you should shudder at publication? Can it be a matter of wonder that, advanced too far to retreat, and impelled to violate truth in every other particular, you should feel yourself forced to violate the right of publication, for which I so expressly conditioned? Or that irretrievably criminal, and tremblingly alive to detection, you should send Mr. Cooke in Lord Cornwallis's name with that murderous menace, that if any of the prisoners 'should, from a feeling of the honour of their fellow-prisoners, their friends, or themselves, attempt to contradict these falsehoods and calumnies, which you had dared to advance, *executions should go on as formerly*. Can the most REGULAR Government that has ever appeared upon earth exhibit such another instance of distributive injustice? Is this a part of that clemency which you say I have experienced? Is this a specimen of that mercy for which you have asserted I am so much indebted? \*

“ For the part I have taken in my own country, my acts shall be my vouchers ; neither the force of foreign mercenaries, nor the corruption of traitors, nor the falsehood of ministers, nor the calumny of hired defamers, nor the torture of tyrants, can condemn me, as long as conscious integrity finds a place in my heart. Disloyalty, rebellion, and treason are confounded by the mass of mankind with the success that attends them ; whilst, with the magnanimous, success conveys no acquittal, nor defeat condemnation. That the constitution *contained* some of the purest principles of liberty, that they have been most violently assailed, that the assailants have been enormously criminal, and that they should

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\* I have here, for want of space, unwillingly omitted several pages, which relate to the trial of the writer at Maidstone, and the charges made against the English Opposition members, which O'Connor ably refutes. They have no reference, however, to the negotiation.



be selected for exemplary justice, I have uniformly asserted—then let those vital principles of the constitution be the standard, and let their violation be the criminal test. I ask but that the world should be informed of the part I have acted; there have been instances of virtue which might challenge the brightest page of the world, there have been crimes which cannot be equalled in the records of hell. I demand a fair allotment of my share in a just distribution, and, with the claims of a calumniated man, I call on my calumniators for publication, not only by the imprescriptable right of self-defence, but by the right of express stipulation. The whole of what has been delivered by me, verbal and written, fills one hundred pages, of which only one was published; publish the ninety-nine which have been suppressed, and when the world is informed of the crimes I have detailed, the criminals I have exposed, and the principles upon which I have acted, then let it judge whether I have had recourse to resistance and to foreign aid against the constitution; or against racks, tortures, lashings, half-hangings, burning houses, rape, military execution, bastiles, free-quarters, and every species of oppression. If these ninety-nine pages contain falsehoods, why have I not been exposed by their being published? If they contain confessions of conscious guilt, contrition, or humbly imploring of mercy, why are they not published? If these pages do not contain unanswerable charges against the King's ministers; if they contain anything that can be tortured into their justification, and above all, if they contain a syllable that impeaches the credit of the opposition of England, is it credible that they would not have been published? Give them every line to the world, and if they contain a thought which the man who loves his species can disclaim; if they contain dereliction of my principles, breach of my engagements, treason to my cause or my country, or perfidy to my friends, let me be overwhelmed by the infamy attendant on an instant exposure. You dare not: like the witless bird, you hide your head and think you have escaped detection. When it is known that of one hundred pages, ninety-nine have been kept back, are you so weak as to imagine that any other reason will be assigned than that your own crimes have made you suppress them? Can the silliest dotard suppose that you have broken your solemn engagements, and held out those Septemberizing menaces in Lord Cornwallis's name, to prevent the publica-

tion of those ninety-nine pages, if they contained an particle that could criminate me, or impeach the honour of the Opposition of England? No, they will surmise the truth; they will be convinced that you have uttered falsehoods, that you have given grounds for calumny, that you have deceived the Parliament, and that you have prostituted the name of a man of honour, to the most infamous, murderous menace, and to most dishonourable breaches of the most solemn engagements.

“So truly Protean have you been with the state prisoners, from the beginning of this transaction to this instant, that I am wholly at a loss to find any two parts of your conduct which have any accordance with truth, with each other, or with the agreement. Immediately after we had performed our parts of the conditions, and before a sense of your dishonourable conduct induced you to violate yours, you clearly perceived that by the compact we had reserved a choice of country for exile, and that we had not excluded ourselves from passing into any country on the globe that was not at war with Great Britain; you were convinced that, by your own stipulation ‘that we should not pass into an enemy’s country,’ it was implied that we were to emigrate during the war, while there was a country to come within your exception; nor had you yet forgotten all those professions of liberal construction, good faith, and honour of which you had been so lavish. In this mood you sent Mr. Cooke to our prison, on the 18th of August, with a fair construction of the compact, verbal and written, that we were to emigrate to any country not at war with Great Britain; on the 16th of September you sent Mr. Marsden to inform us that we should be detained during the war; on the 21st of October, you again informed us, by Mr. Cooke, that we should emigrate to America, and not be suffered to pass into any other country whatever; on the 22nd, the very next day, you sent Mr. Marsden to tell us we should not be suffered to go to America; on the 5th of December, you again sent Mr. Marsden to tell us, that all the state prisoners might emigrate to any country on the Continent not at war with Great Britain, with the exception of fifteen, who were to be further detained; and although more than a month has elapsed since this fifth interpretation of the agreement, and that many of the non-excepted have demanded to be suffered to emigrate, they are still prevented from leaving the prison;



and whilst I am writing this letter, it will not surprise me if you should send a sixth interpretation of the agreement, as contradictory to the whole as those you have sent are to each other. But to what end shall I waste time in reciting any more of your conduct? The man who has shown a total contempt for truth and good faith in one hundred instances, would betray the same in one thousand. Then setting aside every idea of the existence of the agreement, in which equivalents and terms are set forth; setting aside all those professions of liberal construction and good faith; leaving you to reconcile your plea of necessity with non-performance of compact, for which stipulated equivalents have been religiously paid, I call on you to reconcile those manifold contradictions and prevarications which have appeared in your various interpretations of the agreement with justice and honour, which can be but one.

“You would have been happy, no doubt, that I had implicated Lord Cornwallis and the Parliament with you in this accusation, but in this you shall find yourself widely mistaken; for much as you have defamed and deceived me, and vilely as you have attempted to furnish grounds for calumny against the opposition of England, your conduct to Lord Cornwallis and the Parliament is not less flagrant. Detected of such manifest breaches of truth in the outset of your ministerial career, the fragrance of your perfidy forms the strongest evidence that you are the sole author of those disgraceful transactions which I have detailed; whilst the unimpeached character for incorruptible integrity which Lord Cornwallis has uniformly supported, in some of the most trying situations, carries as forcible evidence that he has not debased himself, thus suddenly, to so low and so vile a degree. As to the Parliament, you, and you only, could have furnished the statements upon which their proceedings were founded; and that you did not lay the written agreement before them is manifest from the debate on our advertisement, when some of the members declared, on the second day, that their having seen General Nugent’s publication of our agreement, wherein it was stated that we had stipulated ‘not, by naming or describing, to implicate any person whatever,’ induced them to alter the opinions they had expressed on the preceding day, when they had not been informed of those conditions.

“Wholly acquitting Lord Cornwallis, and not interfering



in any wise with the Parliament of Ireland, without saying one word of the future, I have accused you in the face of the world, as a minister who has uttered the most gross falsehoods of me ; that you have entered into engagements, for the performance of which you have pledged the faith of Lord Cornwallis's administration, and that you have been guilty of the most direct violations of your agreement, attended with all those shifts, subterfuges, contradictions, and prevarications, to which the honest man can never be driven, and from which the cunning, pitiful, unprincipled courtier can never be free. I have impeached you of keeping back from the Parliament that written agreement, to which you had pledged the Executive Government, and of furnishing the officers of the Crown with materials for a law in violation of the letter and spirit of those very conditions to which you had bound it. I have impeached you for having prostituted the name of a man whose honour was unquestioned before you had profaned it, by setting it to a menace the most infernal, whether it be considered for its injustice, in attempting to silence men (whose honour you had attacked) by placing the dagger to their throats to prevent them from justifying their characters by that publication for which I had expressly conditioned ; or whether it be considered for its style of more than Robespierian butchery, in threatening to take the lives of eighty-nine for the *crime* of one, and that no other than the *crime* of exposing your perfidy, and of vindicating their honour. Then let me be that criminal—mark me for your victim ; for if to declare to the world that you have most foully belied me, and that these falsehoods have been made the grounds for calumny against the most honourable men, be the forfeit of life, I have no desire to live. If it has come to this, that to contradict the falsehoods of a minister be a capital offence, if every Tyro in office is to be erected into a Bey or a Bashaw, in these times of blood, life is not worth the keeping. If I cannot live with honour, nay, if I cannot live but loaded with infamy, and to be made the stalking beast for the assassination of the fair fame of my best benefactors, it is time for me to die. You knew I demanded a trial—you knew I demanded not to be required to sign any agreement, and yet you have told the world that I have *most humbly implored pardon*. You knew I asserted my principles, and vindicated the cause I espoused, in the

worst of times ; you knew you had required of me to retract this assertion and vindication, and that I refused to do either ; yet you have told the world, '*that I have confessed myself conscious of the most flagrant and enormous guilt, and expressed my contrition.*' You knew that of ninety state prisoners, six only have been examined ; that these six have not, in the most distant degree, *confessed conscious guilt, or contrition, or humbly implored pardon*, and that the eighty-four have never been asked a question ; yet you have told the Parliament '*that every one* of the ninety have made the like *confessions of guilt, contrition*, and have alike *humbly implored pardon*. You know that the written compact contained a stipulation that the country to which we were to emigrate 'was to be mutually agreed on between us and the Government,' yet you have told the Parliament 'that we had conditioned to be transported to such foreign country as to the King should seem meet.' You knew that I had expressly declared that my brother would not enter into any conditions with the Government ; yet you have first attempted to terrify him into your measures, by sending the very Mute you had sent me, and when this was treated with the contempt it deserved, you took advantage of our separation to try to make him believe that I had promised he should enter into conditions. You knew that I had expressly conditioned for the right of publishing every part of the information I might give, conformably to my agreement, and also of refuting calumnies ; you knew that this right had been recognised by your colleague, Mr. Cooke, some time after we made our agreement ; yet you have not only violated this important condition, but you have added to the sufferings of a prison, and held out your murderous menace. You knew that you had conditioned that we should emigrate after we had performed our part of the compact ; and now that our's has been faithfully discharged, you have set up a plea of necessity, which is equally valid for detaining us for life as for an hour, and equally reconcileable with your contradictory interpretations and shameful prevarications.

" These are a small part of the catalogue of breaches of faith, honour, and truth, of which I accuse you. As to what concerns the written agreement, compare it with the law which you were pledged should be in perfect conformity with its spirit and letter. and for which you were bound to furnish



the matter for the Parliament to go by ; yet I will submit to be branded for the most infamous liar, if this law is not a most gross violation of the agreement which the Chancellor declared, 'the Government that could violate, neither could stand, nor deserved to stand.' But though there had not been one of those express stipulations, or those dishonourable infractions, should I have forfeited every right of humanity? Should I have borne with every falsehood and every calumny malice and perfidy have poured out against me? No, I should still retain the imprescriptible right of self-defence—that right with which God and nature have armed every man, and of which no power on earth can deprive him. Let it cost what it may, I will rescue those honourable men from the calumny for which you have held me out as having furnished the matter. The means which have been hitherto used to dispatch me, leave me no doubt of what I have to expect. The solemn declaration of Coigley (in the presence of persons of the first credit) of the proposal conveyed by Griffith, for saving his life and the giving up mine, gives some idea of the justice I have any hope of obtaining. Abandon those underhand means—spare your murderous menace—send me your Mutes. The same necessity which can justify your detaining me a prisoner for life, will equally justify you for my murder, and infinitely more than for my calumnation. The man who has lived in constant habits of intimacy with death for these last three years, had he been the veriest coward, must now be familiar with his most ghastly appearance. Not a night that he has not sat perched on my pillow, not a step have I taken that he has not walked by my side, not a thought nor an act that was not directed to what, I was convinced, was the good of my country, and not a thought nor an act that did not forfeit my life, by the code, martial and civil, to which my country has been made subject. My prison is the mansion of death—its inmates in succession are dragged to the gallows—its porch is the scaffold—and the hangman is amongst my attendants ; yet you imagine you can infuse terror by your dastardly menace. Do not yourself such injustice ; you have not prepared me so ill for the language of the assassin, or the executioner's gripe. Torn myself from the loved, adored, chosen friends of my heart, is there a fibre that can link the parent to his child, the wife to her husband, children to their parents, or to one another, that I have not seen torn asunder by the



ruffian hand of ruthless power, in those different prisons of misery, where I am doomed to pass the vigour of life? Is there an insult you or your underlings have not practised? Is there an alleviation of which you have not sought to deprive me? One only comfort I had left—I shared the prison of the twin brother of my soul; I shared his sorrows for the sufferings of his loved wife and his eight infant innocents, scattered by marshalled bloodhounds, who have plundered his house, ravaged his demesne, and destroyed his property, one hundred miles distant from the pretext of revolt; when the tear started for his absent, helpless children, or for his beloved country, I could press him to my heart, and wipe away the bitter drops from his manly face, or alleviate his sorrows, by making commanage of our feelings, our affections, and our sufferings. This is the brother, whose crimes are his talents, his virtues, and love of the people; for whom an acquittal serves but to prolong your cruelties and his persecutions. Bereft of this last, this only comfort I had left, familiarized, not only with death, but with its most sublimated horrors, trust me, there is no terror in your threats. Beloved, faithful countrymen, have you, with a fidelity unparalleled in the annals of the world, preserved my life in defiance of torture, that I should drag it along in a dungeon, loaded with chains and infamy, for the mere sufferance of respiration! You, whose discoloured faces, and swollen tongues hanging from your mouths, scarcely able to receive sustenance for the support of existence, describing the stranglings you have endured more feelingly than eloquence could utter; and you, whose flesh has been torn from your bones by lashings, and torn again before it had been cicatrized, have you borne all (when but to have sighed my name in the ravings of your tortures, you would have been cherished as the saviours of your country), that I should breathe but by the bounty of calumniators! And you, dear, venerated, departed friends, have you taught me by your example to balance between death and infamy—you have been made exiles from the world, I have submitted to be exiled from our beloved Ireland: let him that loves his country, estimate the difference!

“You may imagine that justice has been silenced by the storm which has raged, and, in your triumphant course, you may revive the ancient law which makes the murder of mere Irishmen justifiable homicide. I am indeed a *mere Irishman*; the county knows me to be nothing else: like

Williams and Lawrence,\* you may confess the fact and plead the CUSTOM; a host of precedents in six hundred years will bear you out—but not so fast—returning calm may one day bring the reign of reason back, the man who ‘smeared the sleepy grooms’ will find ‘there is no foundation set on blood.’ A few designing villains may delude—they cannot with the like success betray.

“At any time, justice to myself, and to those venerated men you have attempted to defame, would call for the disclosure I have made; but now, when ministerial confidence has become the wicked and destructive jargon of the day, it is a duty I owe my country to give a true and faithful picture of the honour your ministerial integrity affords. If the time shall ever come when a treacherous advantage of our cruel disunion may be taken, by a desperate effort to destroy even the shadow of our national independence, and erase this great and powerful island from the list of nations—if, adding insults to injury, equivalents shall be talked of for what is beyond all value, and that to dole out as charity the thousandth part of the rights which God and Nature gave us shall be called equivalents—if enormous burdens shall be added, and that we shall be told they are meant\* for our relief, and if in this monstrous project you should hold a ministerial station, let your conduct towards me be the earnest of your conduct to the nation. Let me be banished to the most distant pole, you cannot eradicate the love of country from my heart: Country is my God; upon its altar I could offer up, not only fortune, not only life—I can do more—I can sacrifice revenge. Had the dreadful list of those beloved friends, whom I shall mourn while I live, been greater than it is—had the profusion of my own particular blood been so abundant that I were left the last of mine own race—did my sufferings equal, for exceed they could not, the most excruciating tortures which have been inflicted throughout all INNISFAIL—if *the salvation of our island were at stake*, I would stretch out one arm to grasp the bloody hands of my deluded, maddened,

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\* Sir John Davis cites the record of these two cases, to prove that the murder of the Irish people by the English was a legal act. Williams confessed the murder, but proved the man he murdered was a mere Irishman: Williams was acquitted. Lawrence set up the same plea, but it appeared the man he murdered was an Englishman: Lawrence was hanged.



betrayed countrymen, point the other to our common parent, and in the deliverance of our common country bury all remembrance of the past ; while mutual tears of bitterest grief, sorrow, and regret, should wash away all memory of how all former blood had flowed. Add these to my crimes, and let the exposure of your guilt be one. The more clearly I have depicted you, the more vindictive your revenge. What I value, and which I now defend, is above your reach ; power is not tempered to pierce the shield which honesty can forge—put character upon its trial, no jury can be packed—the patriots who have ever lived are duly summoned to attend, and time records the verdict. The patriots of Greece and Rome, the Russels, Sydneys, Hampdens, and Roger Moore, the patriots of Helvetia, of Batavia, of America, have all been branded traitors, in the days they lived ; but posterity has done them justice. Patience, Koskiousko, your beloved Poland has been partitioned by the ruffian robbers, who have shed her blood ; justice has but slept—ten years, nay, not five have yet elapsed ; ‘time is the old justice that examines all such offenders.’ Character is never fairly before the world until the owner is no more. While I live, though it be within the precincts of the scaffold, I will vindicate my honour ; I will raise my voice from the depths of my dungeon, and when I shall have discharged the last debt my country can expect, or I can pay—the world will do me justice.

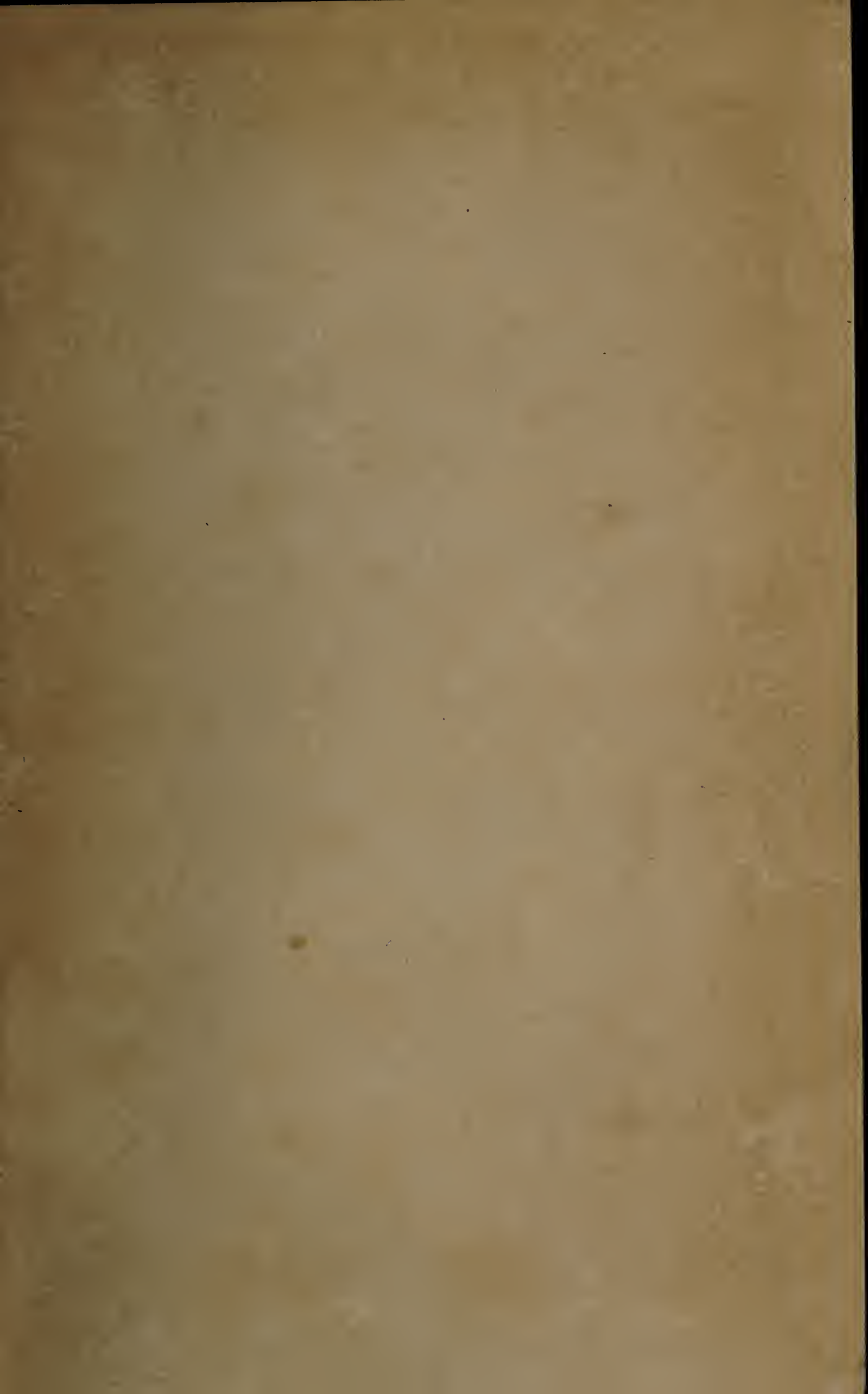
“ Young Lord, I sought you not ; you have grappled with my honour upon these troubled waters ; if yours shall have perished, blame your own temerity. Mark but the smallest shade in any charge I have made against you that is not grounded in the brightest truth, and I will feel more pleasure (if possible) in retracting it than I have felt pain in travelling through the long and shameful history of your dishonour. Those who know me best will acquit me of the despondent, gloomy mind which likes to dwell on human nature’s dark, deformed side ; whilst those who know me least and hate me most shall seek in vain for grounds for defamation. Had your offences been those of folly, of inexperience, of ignorance, or of inordinate presumption, the pompous, empty carriage of the man should have ensured your acquittal ; but vacant indeed must be the mind that cannot mark the strong and glaring lines which separate truth from falsehood, honour from infamy, and faith from

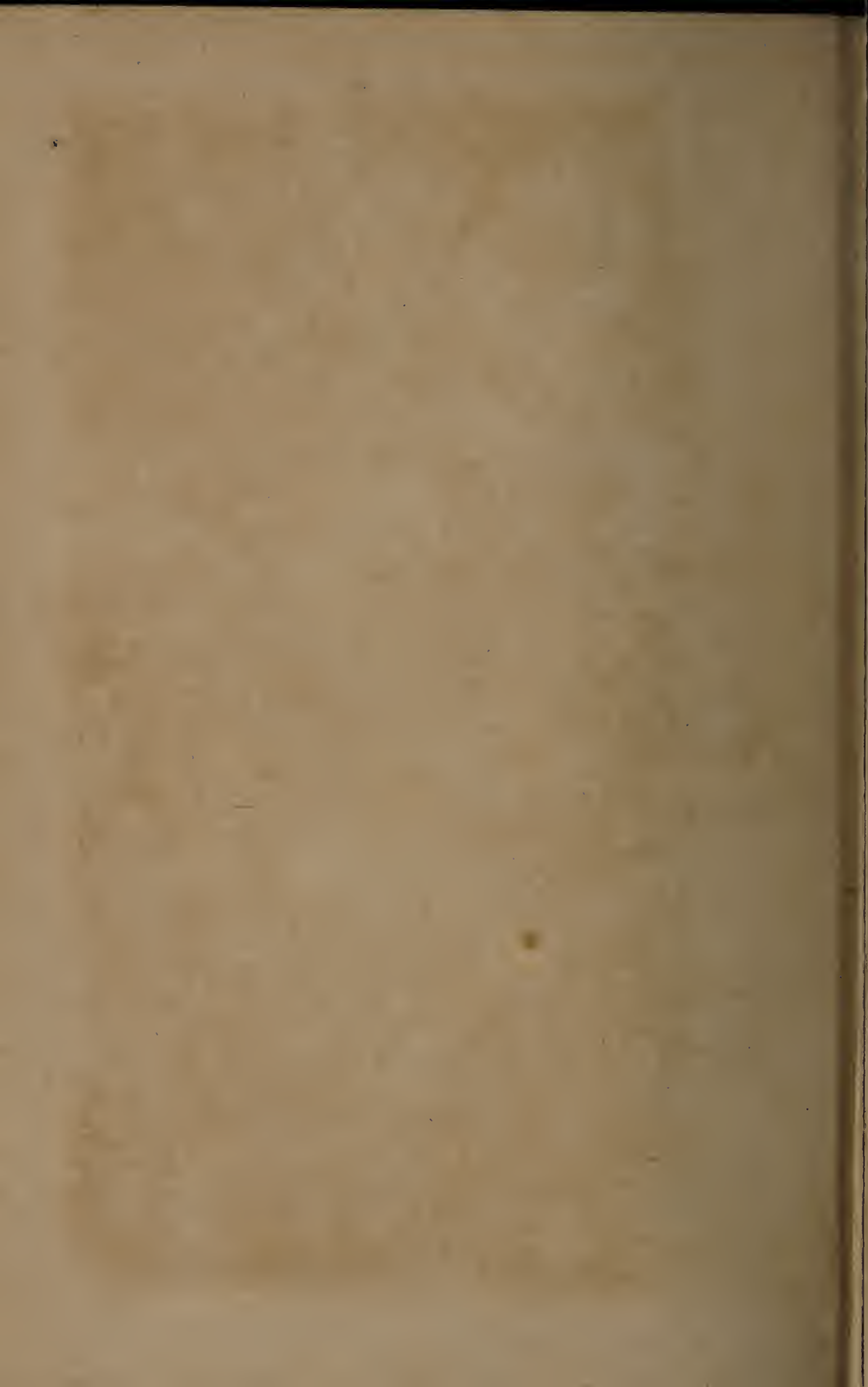


perfidy. Convince me that you are guiltless, that I am in error, and I will do you justice; but with these strong impressions of strong conviction on my mind, I can subscribe myself with no other sentiment than that which arises from a mixture of pity and contempt.

“ARTHUR O’CONNOR.

*“From my Prison—January 4, 1799.”*







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